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# **A HISTORY OF SOCIALISM by SALLY GRAVES**

It is a curious fact that, although the public for socialist literature has enormously increased recently, there is still no adequate history of socialism in the English language. Books about the Russian Revolution, the Chartist Movement, or the Paris Commune are greeted by an eager mass of readers whose general knowledge of the whole subject is at best derived from Kirkup's out-of-date primer or party pamphlets. Miss Graves now attempts to fill this gap and to provide a readable introduction to the rest of socialist historical literature. The scope of her book is wide. Its first chapter deals with the political repercussions of the early phase of industrial development in Britain ; its last with the role of socialist governments in a Europe dominated by power politics.

“ It is intensely intelligent. A valuable text-book, factually sound and well-informed.”

*The Times Literary Supplement.*

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# A HISTORY OF SOCIALISM





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SALLY GRAVES



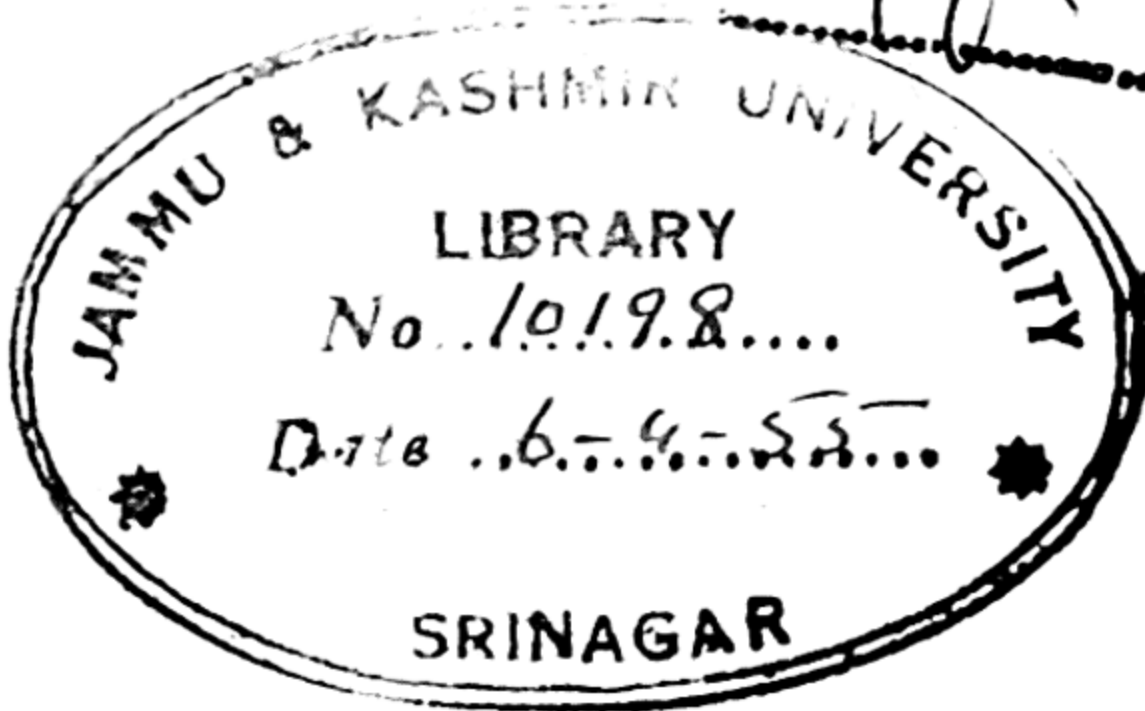
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## PREFACE

**I**N a history of this kind a certain lack of proportion is inevitable. It is a rearrangement of already more or less familiar facts, disposed so as to provide a background to the study of socialism. Most of the topics have not been included on their own merits as curious and interesting collections of facts, but on their merits as pointers to trends inside the general outline. It would have been interesting, for instance, to have provided a parallel history of capitalist development—but that would have turned the book into something quite different. It would have been instructive to have a detailed account of the legislation of Swedish socialist cabinets—but that would have entailed writing a pocket history of modern Sweden.

I have, however, tried to focus a disproportionate amount of attention upon recent events in Spain. Very little authoritative material in French or English exists on the subject of Spanish socialism, and it is correspondingly difficult to arrive at a correct perspective. But it is clear enough that recent Spanish history, even more than recent Russian history, is going to become extremely important to socialists. For it contains practically all the elements, although in different proportions,

of the socialist situation in the whole of Europe. It has raised all the problems, economic, political, administrative, and moral, that are likely to be raised again in other countries, albeit at a more furious and brutal tempo. The political and military defeat of the Government in Spain, as well as its moral victories, ought to move socialists to a thorough reconsideration of their position. A reconsideration of political tactics is already in progress. But what is still more essential is a new survey of the forces arrayed against them.

I am conscious that I have not done justice to the rich controversial literature that deals with the economic evolution of Russia; the narrow compass of the book precluded it. I can only direct the interested reader to the more detailed material that already exists.

S. G.

## CHAPTER I

### FROM LUDDISM TO CHARTISM

**I**T is necessary to emphasize the fact that the industrial revolution was not the work of a handful of inventors and manufacturers. Indeed, it was one of the most anonymous revolutions in history. There was hardly any manufacturing process which was adopted at this period which can be said to have originated in a single man's brain. Most of them were modifications of well-known processes whose commercial use was beginning to be realized. They were the natural answer to the demands of an expanding market.

The effect of the new techniques on labour was threefold. They increased the employment of unskilled labour. They necessitated an ever-widening market—without which unemployment would inevitably follow. And they concentrated the labourers into factories. Their first effects on labouring conditions were due partly to the breaking up of the old skilled crafts and partly to the tremendous outlay in “overheads” borne by the early capitalists. A temporary but heavy unemployment was caused by the substitution of domestic by factory industries. While the new factories absorbed some

of the unemployed, they also called in being conditions of extraordinary hardship. It was considered necessary to make up for the initial expenditure on premises and machinery by increasing the productivity of labour—in other words, by making the labourer work very long hours for very low wages.

Most people are acquainted with the darker sides of the industrial revolution—child labour, the apprentice system, insanitary conditions, and the dangers to human life of primitive and experimental machinery. Yet in spite of the squalid conditions in which the vast majority of the industrial working class lived, there was, according to contemporary authorities, a marked increase in the factory population, largely due to a decline in the death rate. Thus between 1800 and 1831 the population in England and Wales increased by some five millions. An improvement in the standard of living, and increased medical and sanitary knowledge contributed to the decline in the death rate till 1815. After that date the decline was checked, but an increase in the birth rate kept up the increase of population. While a growing state of urban congestion, which outran the existing medical and sanitary resources, lessened the normal expectation of life, various factors contributed to a rising birth rate. Chief among these were the demand for child labour, the breakdown of rural custom which tended to encourage late marriage, and the Speenhamland system of poor relief which made up insufficient wages by



grants according to the size of the recipient's family.<sup>1</sup>

The attitude of the rich towards the growing army of industrial poor was determined by the panic-fear of popular violence engendered by the French Revolution, and by the common acceptance of a garbled Malthusianism. This doctrine presented the rich with an excellent reason for not undertaking reforms to improve the standard of working-class life. It was only against strenuous opposition that Sir Robert Peel the elder was able to pass his Health and Morals of Apprentices Act in 1801. The French Revolution and the anti-Napoleonic wars had followed the industrial changes too swiftly to allow for the development of much leisured philanthropy. Jacobin ideas, or any ideas which were tainted with political reformism, were considered to be flagrantly unpatriotic. In fact, these ideas had made very little headway in the new working class, and their chief exponents were middle-class London radicals and a small number of craftsmen in skilled trades. It was feared, however, that the more educated skilled artisans might organize the unskilled factory operatives in support of a national revolutionary movement along French lines, and panic legislation of a most barbarous kind was designed to prevent such an outbreak. Pitt's repressive measures were remarkably successful.

<sup>1</sup> It must be kept in mind, too, that in developing industries where cheap unskilled labour was required, children were employed in preference to their parents, who were left to subsist on the earnings of ten-year-olds. Working men with large families were considered most fortunate by their fellows.

The Corresponding Societies—small groups of radically minded men engaged in propaganda for political reform—were suppressed, and with them temporarily vanished the middle-class reform movement. The existing working-class organizations were undermined by Government spies and *agents provocateurs*. Such organizations which had survived the economic upheaval at the end of the century were largely unpolitical, and only political in a very negative sense. Trade clubs and societies were at that period small craft bodies engaged in safeguarding craft standards of employment, acting as benefit societies, meeting for conviviality, and occasionally striking work in a body or negotiating with their employers. They were in no sense conscious political bodies acting on behalf of a class, but it was held that they might develop dangerous tendencies and they were accordingly suppressed by the Combination Acts of 1799 and 1800. Side by side with these associations, which lingered on in spite of the legislation against them in less highly industrialized localities, grew temporary combinations of dissatisfied workmen in the new factory districts.<sup>1</sup> Until 1808 these were kept under control.

<sup>1</sup> Their temper can be gauged from the following proclamation issued by the Society of Cotton Weavers in Bolton in 1799.

“The present existing laws that should protect weavers being trampled underfoot for want of a union amongst them, they have come to a determination to support each other in their just and legal rights, and to apply to the legislature of the country for such further regulations as it may in its wisdom see fit to make, when the real state of cotton manufacture shall have been laid before it. . . . Ye who are our enemies . . . are ye afraid that we should approach Government and there tell the truth, that ye use the mean artifice of stigmatizing us with the name of Jacobins, that ye raise your rumours



The new volunteers and yeomanry, recruited chiefly from the well-to-do, acted, in the absence of a regular police force, as strike-breakers. But in spite of the constant supervision of Government agents and the military, the defeat of the Minimum Wage Bill in Parliament in 1808 provoked the first serious industrial movement in the cotton industry.

This is an important date in the history of the British working-class movement, for until the point-blank rejection of their demands by the Government, the factory workers had hoped for State intervention on their behalf along the lines of the Elizabethan Statute of Artificers. When the State disclaimed all responsibility for the fixing of wages and embarked upon a *laissez-faire* policy, the cotton operatives struck on a large scale.

In 1810 the miners in Northumberland and Durham struck. In 1812 the Scottish weavers came out in a general strike. The temporary organizations behind these movements were immediately broken up, and their leaders were imprisoned. At the same time a section of the working class, the framework knitters, embarked upon a new and desperate tactic against authority. The introduction of more efficient machinery had put many of these men out of work, and at the same time the employers were cutting down their rates of pay. In 1811 a well-organized movement was started to break up the new machines in the Midland districts. The

of plots, riots, etc. ? We disdain your calumny and look upon you with the contempt you merit." (Quoted in Mantoux's *Industrial Revolution in the Eighteenth Century*, p. 453.)

Luddites, as the machine-wreckers were called, seem to have been both secret and efficient, for none of their leaders were caught and their ruthless methods finally induced the masters to raise wages.

One can well imagine the consternation brought about by this sudden show of fight on the part of a section of the poor. Secret committees prepared new and stringent legislation. It was a nervous period, the long war had aggravated the misery of the working classes and increased the malaise of the rich. The middle-class reform movement took advantage of the general feeling of dissatisfaction, and when Hunt and Cobbett added a demand for peace to that of parliamentary reform, they gained recruits from all classes.<sup>1</sup>

There was a general feeling that the peace of 1815 would be followed by a return of prosperity. Naturally the slump which attacked both manufacture and agriculture after the war took the country by surprise. The widespread distress moved Parliament to embark on schemes of local relief, and measures were passed to reduce taxation. The radicals demanded the abolition of pensions and sinecures, the repudiation of the interest on the War Debt, and the reform of Parliament. For the first time they gained a large support for their programme. The industrial classes, disillusioned by the rejection of the Minimum Wage Bill, and exposed to the most severe effects of the slump, began to support the radical agitation, to read Cobbett's *Address to the Journeymen and Labourers*, and Wooller's *Black Dwarf*,

<sup>1</sup> They demanded the repeal of the Combination Acts.

and the rest of the cheap Radical press, and to attend the meetings organized by the tireless old reformer, Major Cartwright. The new "Hampden Clubs" were organized on a more popular basis than the old reform societies, and carried the ideas of the suppressed London Corresponding Society and "Jacobin" dining clubs out of London and into the provinces.

So far there had been nothing socialistic in the programme of the reforming radicals. Nor was there anything really revolutionary in Paine's writings—the chapbooks of the touring agitators—or in Cobbett's weekly press. The individuals who had come under the influence of Godwin's philosophic anarchism were out of touch with the political movement. But in the small group founded in 1812 by Thomas Spence one can discern the crude beginnings of a socialist theory. This small conspiratorial association, numbering no more than forty members, and yet so active that it gave the impression of controlling all the radical elements in London, advocated a sort of agrarian communism, a society based on democratic parish communes. Spence's doctrines had first appeared in 1776 and reflected the misery of the agricultural poor rather than the discontent of the factory workers. But schemes for agrarian reform were attractive to town workers, who had only had a generation or two between themselves and the farm and cottage, until far into the nineteenth century. Spence had had some influence in that London Corresponding Society (suppressed in 1799) which had provided an



early training ground for radical agitators. But Hunt and the political radicals openly dissociated themselves from him and his followers and repudiated their former connections. This availed them little, however, when the Government decided to use the tiny Spencean society as a stalking-horse against the radicals. A riot following a meeting at Spa Fields was enough to justify the appointment of Committees of Secrecy in both Houses, the report of the existence of a plot directed towards "a total overthrow of all existing establishments, and a division of the landed, and extinction of the funded, property of the country," and the renewal of the repressive legislation of 1799. Radical complicity in the organizing of a monster petition to the Prince Regent and the provocative activities of the Government spies provided the necessary excuses for a well-organized round-up of radicals. Cobbett fled to America, and many of his friends went to gaol.

But police measures did not put a stop to the unrest. They had the contrary effect, for the dissatisfied textile workers in the north turned from industrial to political agitation, and supported the radical demands for a reformed Parliament in a series of meetings held in 1818 and 1819. The most important of these meetings, held at Manchester in August 1819, had a notable effect on public opinion. Here, a peaceful meeting of about 80,000 persons had assembled to listen to "Orator" Hunt. In spite of Hunt's offer to let himself be arrested, the Yeomanry suddenly charged the crowd. Eleven persons were killed and a large number injured.

This, the "Peterloo Massacre," brought a number of fair-minded middle-class people into the reform movement. Protests from all over the country were sent to the Government, which replied by exonerating the authorities concerned. At the end of 1819 the repressive "Six Acts" were introduced.<sup>1</sup>

It was evident that the Government had decided to adopt a clear policy of repression as far as any legal type of agitation was concerned. It was the hardening of the Government's attitude at this point which led to the one case of treasonable and violent conspiracy which can be proved against the radicals. The Cato Street conspiracy of 1820 was the work of a handful of radicals, led by one Thistlewood and advised by the spy Edwards. It was intended to murder members of the Cabinet at a dinner party, and to follow this up by urging the necessity of a rising. It goes without saying that the plans were in Government hands in good time—for the radical organizations seem to have harboured as many spies as members—and the conspirators were duly executed. A few strikes and riots followed the arrests, but there seems to be very little evidence of plans for a concerted rising.

At this period, the working class was far too disorganized to have serious revolutionary ideas. But in the next decade it began to grow conscious of

<sup>1</sup> These

1. Gave magistrates summary powers.
2. Prohibited drilling.
3. Strengthened the laws against blasphemy and seditious libel.
4. Gave magistrates powers of search and confiscation.
5. Restricted rights of public meeting.
6. Subjected periodical pamphlets to a heavy newspaper tax.

itself as a power in society. Side by side with political radicalism grew a new economic reform movement which was thoroughly socialist in outlook. This was the movement initiated by the enlightened manufacturer Owen.

During the post-war slump Owen had achieved a measure of fame as a pioneer of factory and educational reform. His political views were not at all progressive, and he was *persona grata* in Government circles. When he published his plan for the relief of pauperism through "Villages of Co-operation," his reputation for safe philanthropy caused his scheme to be attentively considered by the rich. Gradually the horrible subversiveness of his ideas became apparent, and Owen found himself shunned by polite society. His scheme was simple enough. He saw with the eye of experience the abuses of the factory system, but realized that nothing was to be gained by putting the clock back. He saw that the increasing productiveness of the new industrial machine could promise a greater abundance of material comfort for all. The fault lay not with the productive side of industry, but in the way it distributed its products. Free competition had turned a potential social benefit into an instrument which made colossal profits at one end of the scale but produced poverty and moral and physical squalor at the other. The solution seemed plain to Owen. Machinery must be regarded as the servant of society: labour, not profits, as the measure of value. Society, therefore, thought Owen, must aim not at the extinction of industrialism but at its control by



“beneficial association.” His plan for “Villages of Co-operation” embodied all these principles. It was a sort of dress rehearsal for the grand final reform. The unemployed were to undertake co-operative production for use, and not for profit, in agriculture and light manufacture. Owen hoped that the Government would finance his scheme, and spent several years touting it about. When, by 1824, it became obvious even to Owen’s trusting optimism that nobody of wealth and influence would touch his scheme with the end of a barge-pole, he set sail for North America to found his co-operative community at New Harmony.

The slight measure of support Owen had discovered among prominent people to start with delayed his realization that social reform on a mammoth scale is hardly likely to be imposed by capitalists. What he did discover was that the moral ideas of capitalist society stood in the way of any radical alteration of the economic structure of society. Hence those numerous and vague addresses of his on the evils of private property, marriage, and contemporary religion, which made his socialistic schemes less palatable than ever to the respectables. The failure of his American colonies—a failure due to fallacious economic theory rather than to incompetence—brought him back to England to discover a growing working-class co-operative movement inspired by his doctrines, a keen body of disciples, and a propagandist newspaper in existence.

In 1824, William Thompson started his career as

an Owenite publicist with his *Principles of Distribution of Wealth*. In 1826 the London Co-operative Society was founded with William Lovett as its store-keeper. In 1828 Dr. William King started *The Co-operator*—a periodical which was both efficient and persuasive. Meanwhile a scattered attack was being made on the assumptions of orthodox political economy. Besides the Owenite pamphleteers, a mixed force sniped at the Ricardian theses. Thomas Hodgskin, a retired naval officer, had foreshadowed Marx's theory of surplus values in his *Labour Defended Against the Claims of Capital*. "Piercy Ravenstone" (perhaps a nom-de-plume of Hazlitt's) demolished orthodoxy along more orthodox lines. A journalist, J. C. Robertson, combined the propagation of anti-capitalist economic theory in his *Mechanics' Magazine* with schemes for working-class education.

The times were suitable for successful propaganda. With the slow return of prosperity, the Government's repressive policy was relaxed. Francis Place, the "Radical Breeches-maker," who occupied the position of industrial adviser to the radical M.P.s, was able to jockey the repeal of the Combination Acts through Parliament with the help of his friends in 1824. Immediately the secret trade combinations came out into the open and began to organize and strike. The employers of labour suggested drastic amendments, or repeal, but again Place, backed by a formidable national agitation, was able to manoeuvre a modified Bill through both Houses. While the 1825 Bill guaranteed the right to combine, it restricted strike action severely. Still, it enabled the



trade combinations to organize themselves legally as trade unions, and for the next ten years the workers in most of the advanced industries organized themselves extensively.

The co-operative movement advanced as rapidly as the radicals' reform movement. Owen's working-class disciples transferred the principles of self-help learnt in the trade unions and trade benefit societies to co-operative enterprise. At first, co-operative stores were started. The balances saved by deducting the retailer's profit were either paid out in dividends or used for further enterprise. Then the trade unions were appealed to. Groups of unionist craftsmen began to market their products through the co-operative stores. The London Society opened its exchange bazaar, in which individual craftsmen or producers' societies could sell or exchange their products. The scheme was very much to the benefit of the trade unions. It employed out-of-work members and provided a market for handicraftsmen thrown out of employment by the introduction of machinery. It was hoped that co-operative production would do instead of strike pay, and save union funds from depletion during trade disputes.

The early 'thirties saw the spectacular but unsuccessful results of the new alliance between the co-operative movement and the trade unions. Their first venture was an extension of the exchange bazaar scheme. National Equitable Labour Exchanges were started in London and the chief provincial towns on Owenite principles. The prices

in the exchange, designed to supply not only the producers concerned but the public as well, were based on the price of the raw material plus the sum corresponding to the labour-time involved in the production of any given article. Differences in current wage-rates served to measure the values of different kinds of labour, and a new currency—"Labour Notes"—were issued with which to conduct exchange's business. At first the experiment was a success: the public supported it and its currency was accepted by private traders. But the "union shop" system had one obvious snag. While goods marked at less than the ordinary commercial price sold like hot cakes, goods marked at the same or at a higher level rotted and accumulated. After two years' business, most of the "union shops" were forced to close down.

The second venture was nothing more or less than an attempt to capture the whole building industry and run it on Owenite lines.

The Operative Builders' Union, by far the most militant and most powerful in the whole country, had, in 1833, accepted the Owenite programme at its national conference. The programme was an ambitious one and can be roughly summarized thus:

1. The building industry was to be organized as a national guild under the Union.
2. Master builders could join and be employed by the Union providing their election was supported by members.

3. Master builders who refused to join the Union would be denied the supply of labour.
4. Since the object of the Union was no longer bargaining about conditions of labour but the control of industry, its craft sections must surrender their independence and come under a centralized control.
5. Guild members were to be paid a regular salary, whether employed or not.

The enthusiasm of the builders was met by the resolute and organized opposition of the masters. A few contracts were obtained, but before the movement was on anything approaching a sound financial footing, the O.B.U. found itself faced by a series of strikes and lock-outs.<sup>1</sup> Strike defeats and the discontent of a minority of convinced craft-unionists inside the movement led to its disintegration, and by the end of 1834 the big union had split up again into its constituent crafts.

The Operative Builders' movement was the most daring and significant part of a trade union mass movement of a novel kind. Owen had backed Doherty and Feilden, northern trade union leaders, in their campaign for an eight-hour day, and

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the most famous and decisive of the disputes occurred in London in 1834. The brewers, Combe, Delafield & Co., banned trade union labour, whereupon the builders boycotted their beer. Cubitt's, the master builders, then forbade the drinking of any beer except Combe's on their jobs. The firm's men struck, and the other masters declared a sympathetic lock-out and refused to reinstate their employees until they had signed a "document" renouncing their connection with the union. The dispute lasted for months, but the men were finally defeated.

Doherty's National Association for the Protection of Labour had already come into contact with Owenite ideas. Doherty's scheme had been to form a general union of all trades which was, ultimately, to provide the basis for a new politico-industrial organization. At a conference, attended by delegates from trade unions, union shops, and co-operative societies, Owen put forward a more ambitious version of Doherty's plan—the formation of a “Grand National Moral Union of the Productive Classes of Great Britain and Ireland,” which was to include every working-class organization in existence. The idea of “one big union” was enthusiastically received and a period of hurried organization followed. Trade union and co-operative society membership flew up, and even agricultural labourers and women workers organized themselves into lodges and societies affiliated to the “Grand National.” It is doubtful whether Owen's zealous followers realized the magnitude of the scheme they had embarked upon, for it amounted to nothing less than the substitution of co-operative socialism for competitive capitalism. The big employers lost no time at all: they summed up the situation and acted accordingly. At Derby and Leicester they locked out operatives who belonged to the union. Meanwhile, the Dorset magistrates sentenced a group of labourers from the small village of Tolpuddle to seven years' transportation for administering “unlawful oaths”—in this case the initiation oaths of the Friendly Society of Agricultural Labourers. In a few weeks it was clear that the authorities were combining openly



with the employers to kill the "socialist"<sup>1</sup> movement. The astonished labourers retreated.

The passing of the Reform Bill had shown the conscious elements in the working classes that they had no more to gain from an alliance with the middle classes. From 1836 onwards, there was a revival of working-class activity, which now turned away from peaceful schemes for economic reorganization. It was now realized that the peaceful realization of Owen's ideas was impossible unless the machinery of government could be captured and thoroughly democratized. There were four centres of activity—London, dominated by the Owenite cabinet-maker Lovett and Henry Hetherington, Cobbett's ally in the campaign against the newspaper tax; Birmingham, led by Thomas Attwood, business-man democrat and currency reformer; the northern manufacturing towns; and Glasgow, both deriving their inspiration from the group which ran the *Northern Star*—among them the Irish agrarian revolutionary Feargus O'Connor; the gifted journalists Bronterre O'Brien and Julian Harney; Richard Oastler, prototype of the present-day solid trade-union leader; the Nonconformist preacher J. R. Stephens, and the local leaders of working men's clubs.

The passing of the new Poor Law had produced

<sup>1</sup> The word "socialism" was probably first used in an Owenite journal to mark off the movement—a movement for "social" regeneration—from the contemporary political agitation for Parliamentary reform. The word was taken up by the French writer Reybaud, who used it extensively in his book, *Réformateurs Modernes*. The book was an account of the careers and ideas of Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen, and it had a great vogue on the Continent.

an enormous ferment, and had increased the bitter disappointment of the working classes with the liberal Whigs, from whom much had been hoped. Two men attempted to harness this discontent in the south, Feargus O'Connor and Francis Place. But both were too intent to use their Parliamentary connections, too anxious to attach the working-class *élite* in London to a political middle-class group to attract the independent Cockney handicraftsmen. These organized themselves independently into the London Working Men's Association under Lovett's direction and published a prospectus advocating independent working-class agitation for universal suffrage. Very soon similar associations sprang up in the provinces. In 1837 a meeting of the Association, at which Feargus O'Connor was present, resolved to prepare a petition to Parliament advocating the following reforms: universal suffrage, annual parliaments, secret ballot, equal electoral districts, the abolition of the property qualification for candidates, and the payment of members. It was published in the radical press under the title of "The People's Charter," and a group of radical M.P.s promised to introduce it in Parliament in the form of a Bill.

The Charter caught on at once. Provincial associations, prohibited from communicating by letter by the Corresponding Act, asked for "missionaries," and the Londoners sent them. Feargus O'Connor, prevented by Lovett's presence from "muscling in" on the London movement, went up north and made Leeds, Manchester, and Newcastle

centres of the Charter campaign. Attwood's currency reform movement in Birmingham—which gained working-class support because the financial crisis of 1836 had thrown many out of work—accepted all the Charter points except the demand for equal electoral districts, but nevertheless sent out agitators to put the five points to the population of the Midlands. “The great excitement,” wrote Francis Place, “which had already become noticeable in 1838 swept over the southern and eastern counties of England and over South Wales. Birmingham was the centre of the Midlands; Manchester and Newcastle were the hotbeds of the northern counties; Edinburgh and Glasgow the foci of Scotland. The excitement spread rapidly in all directions.” The trade unions took new heart after their recent defeat, and linked the Chartist movement with Owenite ideas in the industrial districts. Thinking workmen re-read Spence's pamphlets and made use of the agitation for universal suffrage in their own circles to raise the issue of the municipalization of the land. The statement in Parliament by Lord John Russell that electoral reform was now definitely at an end for all time turned the Charter agitation into revolutionary channels. Its leaders were not yet clear where they were going; their supporters in the north and in South Wales were becoming more and more truculent. “If they Peterloo us, we'll Moscow them,” was the catchword.

The leaders decided to call a “National Convention” of delegates from all over the country in order



to put the whole moral force of the working men behind the Charter. The moral weapon they had in mind was the "National Holiday"—a week's general strike to be organized on the basis of a plan put forward by the trade unionist Benbow. But at the same time popular support of insurrectionary methods grew: the creation of the new rural police by the Government increased it. The National Convention itself was divided: the Birmingham, London, and Scottish groups were against the use of physical force, but until Parliament finally rejected the Charter the issue was only theoretically discussed.

The defeat of the "Charter" Bill in Parliament was followed by large working-class demonstrations. But the purpose of the Convention was at an end. It had declared itself the "true parliament" of the people, but unlike parliaments, it had no powers. Its only power was the people—but since the people were not all ready to embark upon a revolution while other methods remained, there was no other course left to it but dissolution. But a section of the Convention was dissatisfied. Full democracy, the representation of the masses, was the necessary preliminary to the introduction of far-reaching social reforms; all were agreed on that point. But if the Government had declared itself opposed to the enfranchisement of the masses on principle, if it was to remain deaf to popular agitation "for all time," argued the dissident section, other methods besides legal agitation were permissible. It determined upon a conspiratorial



revolt in the "riper" districts. It mismanaged things badly, and a rising at Newport, led by the ex-J.P. John Frost, met much the same fate as the Cato Street conspiracy.

The futility of the Newport rising impressed even the "physical force" men. It was apparent that an entirely new type of organization was needed. The Chartist leaders met to consider new plans.

Bronterre O'Brien came to the conclusion that the Chartist organizations could only escape acquiring a conspiratorial character if they concentrated their energies upon elections and propaganda. They should therefore put forward their own Parliamentary candidates. McDouall's plan was to form Chartist trade associations and permeate the existing trade unions. Lovett, always suspicious of middle-class politicians like Feargus O'Connor and Attwood, proposed a national network of working-class educational associations, libraries, schools and lecture rooms. In Birmingham and Scotland a "Christian Chartism" sprang up, carrying Chartism into the Churches. Feargus O'Connor was opposed to "Church, Teetotal, and knowledge Chartism"; he proposed a national Chartist daily paper, election activity, and a centralized organization.

The organization which was finally decided upon was a centralized organization built upon small groups of ten, meeting weekly, town ward groups meeting monthly, town councils with executive authority, all subordinate to an executive of seven members elected by the whole body of members. It was called the National Charter Association.

The question of electoral policy became the issue of the day in 1841, and on this point again there was disunity. All were agreed that the Whigs—"the vile, bloody Whigs" the *Northern Star* called them—were the chief enemies. Lovett and the Londoners proposed that Chartists should support those progressive radicals who were willing to support universal suffrage. O'Connor, after a few initial waverings, advised them to break the ministerialists by supporting the Tories. O'Brien's suggestion is worth quoting: "We have nothing to expect either from the Tories or the Whigs. The Tories are reactionary, out and out, and hate everything that is democratic. Their impending victory will be due to the circumstance that 'public opinion' expects the Tories to persecute Chartism more ruthlessly and to stamp it out—that is to say, to accomplish what the Whigs were unable to accomplish. . . . On the other hand, we cannot follow the policy of the London leaders, for Chartism has nothing to expect from the middle classes, since the interests of both are diametrically opposed. We must therefore make use of the elections mainly as a means of agitation." He then goes on to propose that Chartist candidates should be nominated, and that the discrepancy between the huge support on nomination day for Chartist candidates, and the result after polling should be used for agitational purposes. Where Chartists are in possession of a few votes, they should bargain on a reciprocal basis, supporting the party that supports the Charter. "The result of this policy will be two-fold. It will teach the working

classes always and at all times to vote for their own candidates, and to remain strictly in opposition to both Whig and Tory . . . it will show that the people are practically not represented.”

The election agitation, though successful, alienated many workers who accused their leaders of alliance with the reactionaries, and caused a disastrous breach between O'Connor, and O'Brien and Lovett. From now on, the Chartist movement fell entirely under the sway of O'Connor. An alliance proffered by the left-wing radicals was refused. A second petition to Parliament was organized, more revolutionary in tone, since it combined suffrage demands with demands for factory legislation and attacked “monopoly in land, machinery, and the means of transit.” It ended up with a threat of revolution, a threat which was far too often on O'Connor's lips.

Eighteen forty-two was a year of tremendous economic distress. The trade unions were helpless. O'Connor's rhetoric fell upon willing ears. A popular movement for a general strike—Benbow's old idea—swept the north, and O'Connor put himself at the head of it. At first it was a movement to restore wages to the level of 1839. But gradually it became a political strike—no less than a strike for the People's Charter and “collective production.” Just at the point when the Chartist movement reached this culmination, O'Connor stumbled. He did not declare against revolutionary action—he supported it in his speeches. But at the very moment when the trade unionists were waiting for a lead, O'Connor went to London to elaborate the plans



of his "agrarian reform." The strike movement wavered, then collapsed under the Government's military and legal offensive. The leaders were discredited, and the workers, though they still retained their convictions, withdrew from the Association in large numbers.

The final stage of Chartism is a history of O'Connor's failures—the failure of his land settlement scheme and the naive failure of his third petition to Parliament, found to be two-thirds a forgery. The movement could not survive them. In spite of the efforts of Julian Harney and his friend the Chartist poet Ernest Jones, the movement dwindled away. During its last period it came into contact with the democratic movement abroad, and established friendly relations with the French and German refugees in London. But soon all that remained of its vast forces was a small group of intellectuals, whose chief service to British socialism consisted of the influence they exerted over the minds of the Christian socialists F. D. Maurice and Charles Kingsley.

The Chartist movement—linking up as it did the Parliamentary reform movement of Hunt and Cobbett with the socialist philosophy of Owen—was the prototype of all the socialist movements which were to follow. Marx and Engels realized its enormous importance and studied it carefully. Its insurrectionary moods and its moments of fatal indecision were a sign of its youth and inexperience. Its "agrarian" trends were a measure of the misery of the factory operatives huddled together in

ugly, smoky towns—trends which were to survive much later in the fourth enchanting Utopia an Englishman was to produce—William Morris's *News from Nowhere*. Its gradual disappearance coincided with the acceptance of free trade principles and the stabilization of the capitalist system. It was getting out of date. From now on, the British working class turned its energies to the creation of strong trade-union organizations and to co-operative shop-keeping. It was only after the golden age of free trade had passed that a militant minority in the working-class movement took up the old Chartist slogans again—class war, general strike, direct action. The political side of its activity was only revived successfully when Henry Hyndman founded his Democratic Federation in 1881, in order to continue “the great work of Spence and Owen, Stephens and Oastler, O'Connor and O'Brien, Ernest Jones and George Julian Harney.”

## CHAPTER II

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF FRENCH SOCIALIST THOUGHT (1789-1871)

THE French Revolution, although its principles were far from socialistic, contributed in this respect to the advancement of socialist thought: it called into question certain titles to property. It may seem paradoxical that a political movement whose watchword was the "defence of property" should have called into existence an attack on its fundamental tenet. The situation is not without parallel. The English Civil War's illegitimate child was the Digger movement. A situation existed in which property was passing rapidly from one man to another and it was quite natural that a group of idealists should question the whole moral position of the proprietor. The English movement was premature; it had no interest behind it. The French movement was more timely. The insecurity and confusion of the country under successive revolutionary cabals encouraged radical policies, and in Babœuf a small group found a leader ready to agitate and conspire for a "final" settlement along confused but communistic lines. As soon as it

became evident that the "Conspiration des Égaux," Babœuf's organization, contemplated an attack upon property, it was crushed by the government. But not crushed out of existence. It had lasted long enough to infect a number of Parisian artisans with an egalitarianism too literal for the middle-class revolutionaries, and which made them susceptible to similar doctrines preached by other theorists.<sup>1</sup>

The economic legislation of the French Revolution made perfectly clear its attitude towards independent working-class associations. The law of March 2nd-17th, 1791, abolished the old guilds. The law of June 14th-17th of the same year, known as the "loi le Chapelier," countered the formation of active journeymen's societies in Paris by forbidding any association of members of the same trade. That the law was directed solely against coalitions of workmen is patent from the special exemption of Chambers of Commerce from the processes of the new law. Napoleonic legislation was similarly directed. In 1803 a new law forbade coalitions and provided that all workmen should have a pass (*livret*) which could be demanded at any time by

<sup>1</sup> Etienne Cabet was the chief of these. Born in 1788, lawyer, Attorney-General of Corsica, and Deputy, he became editor of a socialistic journal, *Le Populaire*. He escaped to England to avoid imprisonment in France and there wrote his romance, *The Voyage to Icaria*. Icaria was a clean, orderly, scientific, communistic Utopia, controlled by democratically elected technicians, where the business of life was beautifully standardized and where strong public opinion was discouraged. The monotony of Icarian life did not attract many disciples. Cabet started an Icarian colony in America. It failed, and the few offshoots of it which lingered on had little social influence.



the police. (The *livret* was only abolished in 1890.) The penal code reinforced these laws against workmen's coalitions. The workmen, however, soon began to feel that the "freedom to work" announced by the revolutionaries amounted to the freedom to be exploited with no safeguard in association against the unequal workings of economic liberalism. They began to realize that the gradual introduction of machine-methods into French industry would tell harshly against them. There are no figures to show what the frequency of strikes before 1825 was, but in that year there were ninety-two cases of violation of the strike laws. This figure argues a fairly frequent violation in preceding years. Other sources show that whenever the political situation became strained, local strikes assumed a wider significance and voiced a popular discontent with the unreformed monarchy. The notable part taken by working men in the disturbances of 1830-1, when genuine working-class demands were clearly voiced, argues the existence of not only political consciousness but of effective organizations. These were of three kinds, *compagnonnages*, *mutualités*, and *sociétés de résistance*.

The *compagnonnages* were journeymen's societies with a long tradition, encumbered by a mediæval paraphernalia of oaths, emblems and secret signs. Their main function was to find employment for their members and to maintain the standards of their craft. The *mutualités* were trade benefit societies, and in spite of the law against them, they numbered 11,000 members in 1823. The *sociétés*



*de résistance*, all of them secret, were militant organizations for the improvement of the workmen's situation. The most famous of these, the "Devoir Mutuel" of the Lyons weavers, organized the large strikes of 1831 and 1834.

These organizations were reformist in outlook: they aimed at obtaining better conditions from the employers and had no far-reaching schemes for social regeneration. After 1830 other ideas began to attract the French workmen, namely the ideas of the first socialist theorists. The July Monarchy had finally placed the industrial chiefs in the position they had coveted during the restoration, and the first consequence of this change of rulers was the emergence in France of class feeling in a naked and self-conscious form. The condition of the people seems to have been as appalling as in England. Villermé's report on the condition of the working classes revealed an average working day of fifteen hours, frequent local famines, a ghastly child mortality, foul housing conditions, and wages which, in large industrial centres, forced 61 per cent. of the working population below the subsistence level. Flora Tristan, on her propaganda tour on behalf of the "Union ouvrière," found workmen, who had worked in factories since the age of eight, barely able to speak their own language. It goes without saying that brutality, drunkenness, and illiteracy were the chief characteristics of the factory proletariat. The attitude of the "liberal" royalists towards the social question was platonic. Public opinion, after Villermé's report had been published, forced through a

law limiting the hours of labour of children, but it remained a dead letter in most parts of France. The July Monarchy was too busy prohibiting working-class associations to alleviate the general misery, or so it seemed to the intelligent workmen. At first disillusionment with the new régime manifested itself in strikes and riots<sup>1</sup> and secret societies. Between 1830 and 1840 the ideas of Saint-Simon and Fourier found adherents here and there. Between 1840 and 1848 their influence increased with that of Louis Blanc, Pecqueur, Cabet, and Proudhon.

Count Henri de Saint-Simon (1760-1825) was an acute and original thinker. Although his ideas and those of his followers, Bazard and Enfantin, were never made the basis of a political movement, they fertilized socialist thought long after his coterie had lost its influence. The revolution of 1830 brought them into particular prominence. His school protested against the then fashionable liberalism, which they regarded as destructive and immoral. Their main contentions can be roughly summarized thus: First and foremost, the exploitation of man by man must be superseded by the exploitation of Nature by man in association with man. Society must aim at the abolition of poverty and the class system. Capitalist society is based on laws of inheritance which transmit social privileges and social disadvantages from one generation to another without considering the merit of individuals. Inheritance

<sup>1</sup> Witness the abortive rising led by Auguste Blanqui and Armand Barbès in Paris on May 12th, 1839.

must therefore be abolished, and the instruments of production, previously owned by the dominant class, must become the property of society as a whole. The abolition of the class system does not involve a belief in the natural equality of man with man. The contrary is the case, for when the class system is abolished a natural hierarchy based on merit and intelligence will take its place.

These were the guiding ideas of Saint-Simon and his school, but in the course of their propagandist and literary activities other ideas, which also became popular among socialists, were developed. A particular emphasis was given by Saint-Simon to scientific discovery. He wished to replace religion by a sort of scientific deism which combined the best ethical precepts of Christianity with the disinterested pursuit of knowledge. The spiritual directors of his society were to be neither priests nor philosophers, but men of scientific attainments and high character. His devotion to science led Saint-Simon by easy stages to a belief in the value of an international society, his analysis of the laws of inheritance to an advocacy of the emancipation of women. He rejected the most powerful and influential idea of Catholic Christianity, the antagonism of flesh and spirit, and replaced it by a cloudy benevolence towards human sensuality. This attitude of Saint-Simon's was developed, without much warrant, by Enfantin into a system of free love which horrified respectable people, especially when it was combined with an attack on current clerical obscurantism and family morality.



François Fourier (1772-1837) compensated for his lack of general education by a detailed and fantastic ingenuity. While Saint-Simon made a study of history the basis of his social theory, Fourier withdrew into himself and produced his world philosophy out of his own entrails as it were. A large part of his theory is quite worthless. It consists of millenary prophecies, and twopenny-coloured advance views of his Utopia.

The central idea of his system is his belief in a natural law of attraction. Social systems, in his view, must be organized so as to give proper sanction to human instincts: Capitalism prevents the free exercise of the instincts of co-operation and perverts social into antisocial tendencies. The new society projected by Fourier was an association of advanced agricultural communes called phalanxes. The members of the phalanx should be divided into groups according to their natures and talents and given especially suitable work. Necessary work should receive the highest reward and pleasant work the least. Fourier did not insist on the abolition of unearned income; the product of industry was to be divided between labour, capital, and talent. This division naturally perpetuated the division of society into gradations of wealth, but Fourier assumed that a social system based on his theory of the instincts would ensure harmonious co-operation between rich and poor.

Although it was faulty in almost every major premise, Fourier's theory was not without value. It called attention to two important points. The first

was the wastefulness of capitalist economy. The second was the necessity of making boring manual labour as attractive as possible. These and similar views of Fourier's had the greatest immediate influence on the French social movement and led first to discussion and agitation, and finally to improved factory and sanitary legislation.

A committee of Fourier's disciples did attempt to put his whole theory into practice and several communities were started in France. Those which accepted the Fourierist doctrine in every detail failed, while others, which had adopted his views with considerable modifications, were very fairly successful. His views were well received by a group of prominent Americans in the 'forties, and in spite of the fact that the American Fourierist experiments failed, they contributed very largely to subsequent American social thought.

Louis Blanc (1813-82) was the first "utopian" socialist to try to make use of contemporary political machinery. He is generally considered to be the link between the early theorists of socialism and its "scientific" exponents, Marx and Engels. His first socialist work, "L'Organisation du Travail," appeared in 1839 in the radical journal *Revue du Progrès*, of which he was editor. It contains a very effective criticism of capitalist economy and the first attempt at a practical solution of French economic difficulties which had yet appeared.

Blanc had no particular bias against the State as such. He wished to use the State as an agency for reform. But he saw very clearly that a political



revolution must precede an economic one. Consequently he supported the current political agitation for a far more democratic suffrage. He hoped that a democratic government would intervene to abolish the anomalies of the competitive system and institute productive industrial associations run on co-operative lines which would gradually supersede individually owned concerns. These "social workshops" were to be supplied with machinery and credit without interest by the State. The State was to be responsible for their conduct, and, at first, for the appointment of administrators. Later on, when the workmen had become thoroughly acquainted with the industrial problems involved, they could select their own managers. The workshops would be financed by taxation and the revenues derived from nationalized services—railways, mines, banks, etc. They were to federate and form an insurance company to cover the losses of any single workshop. Capitalists would be given a chance to co-operate in the new system. They would be encouraged to invest in the workshops and would receive wages for their labour. They would not be legislated out of business, but they would have every inducement offered them to merge their enterprises with those of the State.

It is easy to hear the tones of modern socialism in Blanc's theory. Wide and democratic suffrage, nationalization of the essential services, production for use by public enterprises, the co-operation of the workmen in factory management, employment for all, are as much socialist slogans to-day as they were

in 1848. Blanc made a significant addition to socialist theory in the realm of morals rather than that of social economy. It has been argued that the chief and fundamental difference between various schools of socialist thought has been a difference with regard to rewards for labour. Babœuf desired a complete equality of remuneration. Saint-Simon believed that the reward of labour should be commensurate with the work performed. Fourier wanted to divide the products of industry between labour, capital, and talent. Louis Blanc produced a new formula—"From each according to his powers, to each according to his needs." "Equality," said Blanc, "is only proportionality: it exists in a true manner only when every person, in accordance with the laws of his bodily constitution written by God himself, produces according to his faculties, and consumes according to his wants." Blanc's own brand of egalitarianism has become the generally accepted ideal of distributive justice among socialists.

Within a year of the publication of "*L'Organisation du Travail*," Pierre Joseph Proudhon brought out a pamphlet on the nature of property. It argued that property was theft because it appropriated other people's labour in the form of rent, interest, and profit without rendering equivalent services. In a subsequent publication Proudhon criticized capitalist financial methods: he proposed the establishment of a "no discount" bank. His writings, though unscholarly and vehement, exaggerated and illogical, ventilated in a popular form the problems that were interesting to intelligent

workmen. They were highly moral in tone, and soaked in a kind of mystical libertarianism. Although opposed to sudden revolutions, and in favour of gradual and easy reforms, his final aims were revolutionary in the extreme. The final goal of social progress seemed to him to be a state of anarchy, to be preceded by a system of "free associations," based on a perfect equality of remuneration. Proudhon's influence on French revolutionaries and Russian socialists was very marked. His attempt to influence contemporary events was less successful.

The unskilful treatment of popular demands for a wider suffrage in the February of 1848 led to a profound political crisis. King Louis Philippe abdicated, and a provisional government of democrats led by the poet Lamartine was set up in Paris. Simultaneously a committee of socialists established another provisional government in the Hôtel de Ville. Both parties amalgamated and power fell into the hands of a mixed junta: Lamartine, Louis Blanc, Ledru-Rollin, Flocon, and Albert. A few days after the revolution decrees were passed instituting "national workshops" to provide useful work for the unemployed. Louis Blanc, who had inspired the scheme, was allowed to have nothing to do with it. There is a strong suspicion that the "national workshops" were meant to fail, and fail they did, owing to the most elementary mismanagement. It soon became evident that the socialist element in the government was being squeezed out. Blanc agitated helplessly and produced a new



scheme for "social workshops." Proudhon, elected to represent the Seine department, found that his banking and taxation schemes were rejected. Meanwhile the manufacturers locked out their workmen and a financial panic ensued. The results of the election under the new suffrage in April showed that the provinces were behind Lamartine. The support the socialists enjoyed in Paris did not prevent their being dropped in the next cabinet. Paris was furious, threw out the Assembly, and nominated a new government consisting of Barbès, Blanc, Blanqui, Raspail, Leroux, Considérant, and Proudhon—a mixed bag of assorted socialists. Before they had time to consolidate their position, General Cavaignac arrived from Algeria, was nominated military dictator by the Lamartine Government, and moved his troops against the barricades hastily erected by the workmen. After three days' bloody fighting, in which about twenty thousand persons are supposed to have lost their lives, the rebels surrendered. Cavaignac closed the workshops, repealed the reforms already passed, and instituted a severe press censorship. Meanwhile Louis Napoleon was intriguing his way into the Presidency.

The events of 1848 prevented the extension of socialist influence in France. The failure of the socialist leaders to make good was not entirely their own fault, though none, except perhaps Blanqui, had the verve and ingenuity that make a successful revolutionary. They were thrown into power at the instance of the Paris artisans and unemployed, and mistook the voice of the faubourgs for the voice of

the whole of France. Their reforms, which were not unpractical, were ruined by their colleagues' disloyalty and inefficiency.

Many suffered exile, and the rest were condemned to a life of academic socialist disputations under the eye of the police. The exiles were not without influence in the countries they adopted, but in France public attention was too engrossed by the re-establishment of French imperial grandeur to be very susceptible to socialist propaganda.

Still, the rapid industrialization of the country at this period extended the area potentially friendly to socialism beyond Paris and Lyons. The Emperor was shrewd enough to divert the political sentiments of the growing industrial classes into peaceful channels, by declaring himself not unfriendly to the various movements for self-improvement which temporarily replaced socialism. The more sinister aspects of French imperialism were covered by the general prosperity of the country, and conscious attempts were made to dissociate progressive ideas from the traditions of 1789 and to link them up with Christian social sentiments. Proudhon's peaceful "mutualism," expressed at length in his *Des Capacités politiques de la Classe Ouvrière*, published in 1863, caught the ear of the French working classes. His recommendation that the working classes should not attempt to deprive the middle classes of their just rights, but acquire for themselves the same liberties, was well received during this period of industrial expansion. It was this "mutualist" movement, stigmatized by Marx as "petty-bourgeois socialism,"



which proved most resistant to the political strategy advocated by the First International.

The French collapse of 1870 naturally brought about a republican reaction. The traditions of 1789 were this time reinforced by the "mutualist" current, by the state-socialism of Louis Blanc, and by the professional revolutionism of Blanqui's few but organized supporters. Napoleon III's fall was followed by the declaration of a republic, the setting up of Committees of Public Safety in the big towns, and by tremendous popular excitement. The republican government wavered between two courses: between a "sacred union" of all parties against German militarism, and the leadership of an essentially popular movement deeply influenced by socialist ideas. As early as September 1870 the working classes were demanding a special levy on the rich and the appointment of army officers by free election. The municipal elections which took place at the time were turned by the masses into assertions of that "localism" which had always played an important part in French utopian socialist thought. The failures of the government and popular exasperation with the activities of war profiteers prepared the way for the Paris Commune of March 1871.

The Paris Commune lasted for ten days. It was, primarily, a revolt against centralism and a revolutionary assertion of the principle of local self-government. Its ideas were shared by Lyons and Marseilles, but Paris had the advantage of a store of arms. The corruption of middle-class commercial

society had renewed the class-consciousness of the Paris workmen. The prevailing political anarchy made possible the consideration of ideal socialist aims. The demand for national workshops was renewed. Proudhonist finance was considered. And at the same time the political demands with which both the republican and parts of the socialist movements had associated themselves were recognized. Universal suffrage, liberty of the press and of meeting, and full rights of association were the political formulas of this first "dictatorship of the proletariat."

## CHAPTER III

### THE BIRTH OF MARXIAN SOCIALISM

(i)

1848

THE type of socialist theory we have been describing, the theory of Owen and Saint-Simon, Fourier and Proudhon, has generally been described as "utopian." In fact, it combined theoretical criticisms of capitalism with tidy paper solutions of its problems. It laid stress on the moral badness of capitalism and on the moral goodness of socialism. But it provided only the haziest guide to action. Owen's grand schemes had a veneer of practicableness, but it was just his ignorance of the forces arrayed against him, his utopian optimism, which brought about their downfall.

If socialism was ever to become an efficient political force, capable of providing a workable alternative to capitalism, it would have to descend into the arena, learn political tactics, gauge the strength of its enemies, and gain sufficient experience to map out programmes which took account of probabilities. In the middle of the nineteenth century the socialists knew in a negative way what they wanted. They were more or less agreed on the

positive moral attributes of their future society. They had even sketched out alternative methods of exploiting the wealth of nature. But on the crucial question of gaining the powers necessary to turn their theory into practice they were ignorant, misinformed or romantic. Many believed that it was only necessary to point out to a sufficiently large number of people how just and agreeable their solution was. And then—hey presto!—or so they hoped—multitudes of “men of goodwill” would rush from the four corners of the earth and help them to set up their ideal society. Others, like Blanqui, hoped to gain the support that was needed by some Brutus-like revolutionary coup which would shake the solidly miserable proletariat out of its apathy. But a time was coming when these generous and ridiculous daydreams were to be replaced by something more scientific and systematic.

In 1848 the Communist Manifesto, drawn up largely by Karl Marx, was published a few months after the first international congress of socialists had met in London. In spite of its indigestible crudities, its acceptance of prevalent historical misapprehensions, and its bombast, it provided comparatively solid nourishment after the wind and rank mist of utopian journalism. Marx, who was twenty-nine at the time, and his helper, Friedrich Engels, who was twenty-seven, were not mere agitators or simple politicians. Marx was a doctor of philosophy, ex-editor of a go-ahead newspaper, author of several controversial books—Engels was a business man of some experience, and the author-to-be of *The Condition of*



*the Working Classes in England.* The Manifesto, written for the newly formed Communist League, was in effect a popularization of conclusions arrived at by Marx and Engels after years of research and study.

It seems necessary at this point to sketch in some slight way the intellectual background of the nineteenth century. The Manifesto was by no means a monstrous piece of originality: it shared with other political writings of the time the prejudice against the eighteenth century's rationalistic conception of the State. In its premises it had more in common with the "anti-liberal" theory of De Bonald and Le Maistre than with the "progressive" theory of men like Paine, who based their thinking on conceptions of natural law and human perfectibility. The existing organization of States was now seen to be based not on an "Ordre Naturelle," but on a combination of influences exercised by social and historical forces. "Law is the expression of existing conditions," of objective conditions like the condition of the soil, and the state of technical knowledge, and of subjective conditions like traditional culture. History was no longer regarded as a chronicle of past events or as a vast struggle between opposing moral ideas. It was seen as a natural series of changes in the distribution of power between hostile interests. "Modern Europe arose out of the struggles of the different classes against each other." Thus Guizot.

The implications of this realistic conception of the State and of history were variously worked out—by conservatives in a conservative sense, by liberals in a constitutional sense, and by Marx and Engels



in a revolutionary sense. Of course Marx and Engels were not the only socialists to adopt the realistic, as opposed to the rationalistic, utopian, view of the State. Louis Blanc had steered in that direction. Lorenz von Stein, though not a socialist himself, directed the German social movement along the lines of historical realism. But Marx and Engels were the first socialists to insist that the success of socialism depended on a thorough grasp of the significance of social movements by the proletariat itself, on its realization of its "historic initiative."

The Manifesto is a discussion of five simple statements:

1. All civilized history is the history of class-conflicts—conflicts between a class demanding and a class defending amenities and privileges.
2. Classes can be distinguished from one another by the part they play in the production of goods, and their relation to the "means of production."
3. The present class-conflict is the conflict between the class owning or controlling the means of production, and exploiting them for its own profit (the bourgeoisie), and the class owning only an option of working or not working the other people's productive enterprises in return for a wage (the proletariat). It is a struggle between a class with economic privileges which it can employ to obtain a great many amenities and a class without economic privileges and only those amenities which it can purchase with its wages.

4. The aim of the struggling class is to establish a society based not on economic privilege but on socialism—on the socialization of the means of production. For it is only by transferring the privilege of controlling production from a class to the people as a whole that the proletariat can obtain the amenities it claims.
5. The bourgeoisie, by their economic and political policies, have determined the way in which the proletariat will undermine their virtual monopoly of economic privilege and of amenities. By collecting workpeople together in a factory, for instance, they have made it possible for those workpeople to bargain unitedly for better treatment by threatening to strike. By competing against each other the bourgeoisie cause slumps and bankruptcies which, though they affect the proletariat's standard of life adversely, also damage a number of bourgeois enterprises. By educating the proletarians sufficiently to make good workmen out of them, they also educate them sufficiently to make good enemies out of them. And so on.

It is the duty of the communists, continues the Manifesto, to point out to the proletarians where their true interests lie. They themselves are not concerned with national questions and patriotic policies. They exist to advance the interests of the proletariat throughout the world, and it follows that their loyalties are class loyalties and not national loyalties. Consequently their attitude towards wars,

i.e. occasions when the State demands and enforces unquestioning obedience from all classes, depends upon circumstances. The communists will only encourage the proletariat to take part in wars of national liberation, or in genuinely defensive wars where the well-established gains of an advanced proletariat are being threatened by an irresponsible power hostile to working-class liberties.

The communists will also encourage the proletariat to make use of whatever political rights they possess. It is absolutely essential for the working class to secure universal suffrage. Where constitutional paths to reform are open, the working class should use them. Where it is possible to capture the higher organs of government by democratic methods, these should be used. But since it is most unlikely that the bourgeoisie will allow the representatives of the proletariat to legislate them out of existence as a ruling class, the proletariat must be prepared to hasten the issue by force of arms.

The cocksure tone of the Manifesto was derived from its premises. It must be remembered that materialist conceptions of history were very generally accepted and needed no special defence. Marx's own theory, stated at some length in the first section of the Manifesto, must have appeared to intelligent radical contemporary readers as an able clarification of the class-war theory restated with an emphasis on the economic functions of classes. The labour theory of value was the axiom on which the whole of nineteenth-century economic theory was built. Even Marx's revolutionary use of it was not novel.



Thomas Hodgskin, in his *Labour Defended Against the Claims of Capital*, had used it against the orthodox economists in England. It was on this basis of generally accepted economic theory that Marx erected his theory of "capitalist concentration" and proletarian pauperization. It seemed to Marx as if capital, i.e. the privilege of controlling the production and distribution of goods, would in time become concentrated in the hands of the very few entrepreneurs who had survived the struggle for markets. At the same time, the proletariat would be forced by the nature of the struggle to accept worse and worse conditions of life. This, for Marx, was one of the chief justifications for revolutionary activity, for "it" (the bourgeoisie) "is unfit to rule because it is incompetent to provide security for its slaves even within the confines of their slavish existence: because it has no option but to let them lapse into a condition in which it has to feed them instead of being fed by them." Given the prevailing economic conditions of the mid-nineteenth century and the general acceptance of Ricardian theory, Marx's catastrophic conclusions must have seemed perfectly reasonable to anybody who had nothing to lose on the catastrophe.

Marx's *Capital*, the first part of which was published in 1867, applied the theories he had worked out in the Manifesto and in subsequent publications to contemporary British industry. It seems worth while to give a précis of "Marxist" theory in Marx's own language. "The general conclusion at which I arrived and which, once reached, continued to serve



as the leading thread in my studies may be briefly summed up as follows:

“In the social production which men carry on they enter into definite relations which are indispensable and independent of their will: these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material powers of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society—the real foundation on which rise legal and political superstructures and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production in material life determines the general character of the social, political, and spiritual processes of life” (*Critique of Political Economy*). In *Capital* this “leading thread,” though nowhere baldly stated, winds through his painstaking analysis of wages, profits, and prices.

Marx has been severely criticized for denying the influence of any except the economic factor in history. It is certainly true that he regarded it as the dominant factor. But at the end of his life both he and Engels were at pains to point out that it was not the only factor. Both by implication and direct statement they recognized that ideas and prejudices, though at the last instance derived from “relations of production,” had a vitality of their own, could survive their proper temporal milieu, and become attached to other groups of ideas and prejudices to which they were originally quite foreign.

This sketch of Marx’s leading ideas, short as it is, can still give the reader a notion of the difficulty Marx’s works present. It cannot be denied that

Marx's was a true scientific spirit. And that is perhaps why his work is not entirely consistent or entirely self-explanatory. Just as Professor Freud gave up some of his earlier hypotheses when these proved unfruitful, and modified those he retained when new material had been assimilated, so Marx allowed new facts and new experience to modify his ideas. It has been said, paradoxically, of course, that the socialist movement has lost more than it gained by Marx's adherence. Certainly his works have provided excellent opportunities for schisms and heresies. But to argue thus is also to argue that St. Paul was bad for Christianity, and Darwin for science. At all events, most socialist parties acknowledge their debt to Marx. While some profess to be true exponents of Marxism, others maintain that the passage of time has invalidated some of his theories. In nearly every case, however, the most bitter quarrels between socialist factions have concerned their attitude towards and relations with other political parties and groups, and on this point Russian and German socialists in particular have fortified their several points of view by copious references to Marx's teaching.

Marx's own political activities, his attitude to existing socialist organizations, and his attempts to influence them provide an interesting chapter in the history of socialist political tactics.

While he was at the University of Bonn, Marx came heavily under the influence of Hegel. He had brought with him to the University the family leaning for French materialist philosophy. Consequently,

it was natural for him to find congenial company in the society of the "left" Hegelians. He passed with them into the philosophical, religious and political radicalism which finally crystallized itself in the materialist humanism of Feuerbach. The rising liberal and nationalist movement claimed Marx's services as a journalist. At first he edited the organ of the Young Hegelians in the Rhineland. During his editorship several factors hardened his militant radicalism. Chief among these were his observation of agricultural distress in the Rhineland, his contacts with French socialist propagandists, and his constant quarrel with Government censors. When his journal was suppressed in 1843 he went to Paris with Arnold Rüge, another Young Hegelian radical, to take charge of the "Franco-German Yearbooks." These were journalistic attempts to establish contact between the radical elements of both nations, and were published by Julius Froebel, one-time professor at Zürich, who had distinct socialistic leanings. The young Hegelian attitude to socialism, however, was still doubtful. It was excited, but platonic. Rüge, when he visited the egalitarian communist Cabet, explained that most German Young Hegelians were communists of a sort, but that their interest in communism was political rather than social, which was just another way of saying that an alliance between communistic intellectuals and working-class agitators was distasteful to, or seemed impossible to, the intellectuals. The "true socialism" which is attacked in the Manifesto is a representative of radical Hegelian



thought. This was the brand of philosophic socialism, derived from Feuerbach's humanism, which attracted the young Engels, the publicist Karl Grün, and Moses Hess, one of the founders of Zionism. The "true socialists" refused to support the German liberal movement and despised the French Utopians. Their naive belief that an emancipated political democracy could be brought into being without first increasing the power of the middle classes, that German society could jump straight from its chaotic semi-feudal state into a humanistic paradise earned Marx's just sarcasm a few years later.

How was it that Marx, a radical Young Hegelian in 1843, was able to criticize the weaknesses of his former colleagues in 1847? His stay in Paris, short as it was, brought him into touch with every shade of socialist opinion. He realized the merits of the critical side of French utopian socialism. He began to appreciate the practical energy of the French agitators. By 1844 Marx had already reached two of his final positions. (1) While it is true to say, as the materialists do, that man's nature is the product of his environment, it is also true to say that men are even more largely influenced by their attempts to alter their environment. Men alter nature, and themselves at the same time. (2) Changes in the structure of society are wrought by men in their own interest. Particular changes are brought about by groups with particular interests. The change from the capitalist method of production to the socialist one must be brought about by the interested group, the proletariat.



A new line of action was now open to Marx. Instead of limiting himself to socialistic journalism, intended for an educated public, he began to get into touch first with working-class thinkers, and then with working-class organizations. His object was to strengthen the working-class movement by putting into its hands the intellectual weapons of the German radical intelligentsia.

This was not easy. The most promising materials at hand were the scattered groups of German artisans in Paris, Switzerland, London and Brussels. These had already come under the influence of various types of radical propaganda. An abortive rising of a democratic character at Frankfurt-am-Main in 1833 had led to the exile of its leaders to France. These were joined by the leaders of the peasant agitation in Hesse. In 1834 a German Exiles' League was founded in Paris by Jakob Venedey and Theodore Schuster. A section of it which had come under the influence of Babœuf's brand of egalitarian communism set up the Federation of the Just in 1836 under the leadership of Karl Schapper, a veteran of the Frankfurt rising, Heinrich Bauer, a shoemaker, and Wilhelm Weitling, the famous revolutionary tailor. This group worked in harmony with those Parisian secret societies engaged in agitation against Louis Philippe's government. When in May 1839 the societies staged an unsuccessful rising under the leadership of Blanqui and Barbès and Dezamy, the Federation of the Just rose with them, and their leaders were consequently exiled again. England and Switzerland received the exiles,

and in these countries the Federation of the Just was slowly reconstituted under cover of the German Workers' Educational Society in London, and of secret societies in Switzerland and Germany. At this time Weitling's influence was at its height. In 1842 he published his most important book, *Guarantees of Harmony and Freedom*, for which Marx expressed a reserved admiration. "Like Fourier, Weitling started his criticism of the social order by an analysis of the passions and needs of mankind. In constructing his plan of a future society, he gave a leading position to the representatives of the applied sciences. He considered that the best way of establishing the new social order would be to bring the extant social order to such a pass that the patience of the people would be exhausted. He could not reconcile himself to the notion of a transitional period during which (in Germany, where the bourgeois revolution had not yet taken place) the bourgeoisie would function as the main ruling class." Weitling believed that the most reliable element to use in the destructive raids he proposed to organize against the possessing classes were the roughs of the big cities, the *Lumpenproletariat*. Like Blanqui, he placed great faith in the psychological results of an armed *coup d'état*.

In 1844, Weitling managed to get to London, and his arrival was marked by a working-class demonstration of an almost international character. It was organized by the exile Schapper and attended by Owenites and Chartists. After a preliminary success with the London public, Weitling's influence

waned, and sounder counsels prevailed. But his visit had important results. It brought the foreign exiles and the English organizations together, deepening the views of the former and broadening those of the latter. In 1845, Julian Harney, leader-writer of the Chartist *Northern Star*, founded an international society called the Fraternal Democrats. Marx and Engels visited England in the same year. On their return to the Continent they set up a committee, which included delegates from the London society, and which set out to keep socialistic groups in contact with one another, and to discuss a joint political programme. At first the committee was hampered by the dissensions between the anarchist followers of Proudhon, the favourers of Cabet's emigration schemes, and the moderate democrats who followed the lead of the Russian Alexander Herzen. In the summer of 1847, however, the committee felt strong enough to form itself into a society with branches in four countries, England, France, Belgium, and Germany, and to announce to its members that Citizen Marx had been commissioned to draw up the much discussed joint programme. The society was the Communist League and the programme the Communist Manifesto.

The League played an insignificant part in the revolutions of 1848. Its French section mostly followed Blanqui's lead. In England, where its adherents were chiefly to be found among the Chartists, the Chartist set-back of April 10th crippled its activities. In Germany individual members of it played a quite prominent part in the



Cologne and Berlin risings, but as an organization it had no influence.

For the next twelve years Marx's contribution to the international socialist movement was critical and propagandist. The Communist League fell to pieces, and the native socialist movements in Europe were condemned to a period of clandestine international activity. But the failures of 1848 had taught the socialists a valuable lesson that Marx was quick to grasp and expound.

First of all, they had shown that an alliance with the middle classes was serviceable up to a point, and no farther. Where political democracy had not yet been established, the proletariat should press for it shoulder to shoulder with the middle classes. Where political democracy had been won, the proletariat should create a political party to press forward its demand for economic democracy. Such a demand could not be entrusted to middle-class parties or to extra-parliamentary movements. There should be workers' parties in existence in every country. At the same time the proletariat should organize itself into strong trade unions. Besides their ordinary uses, trade unions had valuable educative tendencies. They taught the proletariat how to make use of their superior numbers, and why capitalist economy was bound to throw them into conflict with their masters. They were a training ground for socialist statesmen. The failures of 1848 had also shown the necessity for international co-operation between socialists. They pointed to the need of the future—an international organization to co-ordinate socialist policies.



## (ii)

## THE FIRST INTERNATIONAL

The history of pre-war socialism has been commonly divided into five periods: (1) a preparatory period from 1789 to 1817; (2) a utopian period from 1817 to 1848; (3) a reactionary period from 1848 to 1863; (4) the period of the International from 1863 to 1872; and (5) the social-democratic period from 1872 to 1914.

The third, reactionary period, though almost barren of self-conscious working-class movements, provided some causes predisposing to the energy of the fourth period. In Russia, it was a period of administrative reform and lively public opinion. In America, the question of the abolition of slavery was being raised. The Russian problems attracted a great deal of liberal-minded interest. The American question became an international question, and when the civil war broke out the working classes of Europe were easily aroused into a strong partisanship for the Northerners. The temporary stoppage of the export of raw cotton from the Southern States of America caused a large-scale crisis in the European cotton industry. At the date of the first assembly of the International, then, the working classes were both politically excited and economically discontented.

The Great Exhibition of 1862 in London provided a good opportunity for an exchange of views between workmen's delegates from England, France, and Germany. These delegates, meeting formally under the eye of the manufacturers, somehow got into

contact with radical emigrés and with the London trade union movement. The contacts were maintained. In 1863 the Paris committee which had sent its delegates, Tolain and Perrachon, to the Exhibition got into touch with the London Trades Council, and the two committees co-operated to alleviate the distress caused by the cotton crisis. A little later the same people, this time with the support of the radical intelligentsia of London, combined to agitate against the Tsarist government and in favour of the Polish nationalists. The English trade union leaders, Odger and Cremer, saw that working-class co-operation on an international scale had some practical value. The competition of unorganized foreign workers with English trade union labour was thoroughly detrimental to the workers' position in London. It was clear to Odger and Cremer that some international committee should be formed to prevent this sort of abuse. They accordingly sent a feeler to the most representative section of the Paris working class in the shape of a fraternal message suggesting an exchange of views.

A year passed before a French delegation was sent to London. In the meanwhile, the Paris workers had decided to break with the radical political parties and formulate a programme of their own. Proudhon warmly approved this move, and wrote his famous book, *Des Capacités politiques de la Classe Ouvrière*, as a sort of supplement to the workers' manifesto. The Frenchmen arrived in London in good spirits and with definite plans for an international organization with branches in all the principal towns in Europe.

The meetings of the joint delegations, composed of trade unionists, old Chartists, foreign socialist exiles and French Proudhonists, soon alienated the sympathies of their radical sympathizers in England by their bluff working-class tone. Marx, probably introduced by the group of German exiles to the promoters of the organization, impressed the delegates so much that he was put in charge of preparing the inaugural address of the new society, which received the name of the International Working Men's Association. The address was a marvel of political tact. In moderate language, it drew from the contemporary situation of the working class all the fundamental deductions of the Communist Manifesto: the necessity of organization on a class basis, the conquest of political power by the working class, the final abolition of wage labour, the nationalization of the means of production. The mixed assembly of workers, though not all consciously socialist, approved Marx's socialist draft address by an immense majority. He was further employed by them on another task: the provision of regular statutes for the new organization.

The statutes were rather more difficult to draw up, since they dealt not with aspirations but with organization and methods. It was easy to unite Blanquists and Proudhonists on a hazy demand for social justice and the abolition of class distinctions. It was harder to make the Blanquists accept collective bargaining as a social weapon, and induce the Proudhonists to recognize the uses of a direct participation in parliamentary politics. Marx's



statutes were drawn up in a way which, he hoped, would give no offence to any of the parties affiliated to the International. The English socialists understood him well enough, for the statutes were well flavoured with their political commonplaces. The continental socialists were inclined to read into them the social theories most fashionable among them at the time.

The Congresses called by the new organization at Geneva and Lausanne were moderate and conciliatory in tone. The International, although its statutes and the majority of its members were socialist, did not yet declare itself as a socialist organization. But the contemporary unrest among the workers of France, Belgium, and Switzerland, and the frequent strikes in these countries reacted on the International. The International supported the strikes: the strikers supported the International. Consequently the third Congress of the I.W.M.A. at Brussels in 1868 was marked by a more militant and socialist temper. Resolutions calling for the collectivization of the land and other major means of production were passed by large majorities, and it was decided that the whole question of collectivization was to be examined in detail at the next Congress. At the same time it was resolved that the maintenance of peace was one of the chief interests of the working classes. The "general strike against war" was agreed to in principle. The next Congress, at Basel, ratified these conclusions and was marked by interesting debates on the organization of labour. Delegations from Belgium, parts of France,



and the Swiss Jura, Holland, and Spain, supported a far-reaching interpretation of the functions of trade unions. They saw them not only as defensive alliances of the working class inside a capitalist economy or as training units for socialist leaders, but as the germs of the future socialist society. The Belgian delegation suggested the formation of Chambers of Labour, local and national bodies elected from the ranks of organized labour. These were to discuss questions of economic organization in a way which would prepare the working class for its future administrative duties. These chambers were also to comment on the business of the bourgeois parliaments.

The intention of the Belgian delegation was, in the words of Bakunin, "to create a great academy, in which the workers of the International, combining theory and practice, can and must study economic science, at the same time bearing in themselves the living germs of the new social order." Here was a puritanical conception of socialist action very different from that of Marx, of the English Chartists, and of the German social-democrats. It completely ignored the possibilities of the political organization of the working class within the framework of the middle-class State, was prepared to throw overboard all methods of political pressure for economic reform, and gave up all hopes of capturing a large share in the government of middle-class States by means of votes cast for an independent workers' party. The resolution was inspired by Bakunin, whose views merit a longer exposition.

After his escape from exile in Siberia Bakunin turned again to his old activity, agitation on a vaguely democratic Panslav basis among the Slav minorities. With a reputation as a "liberator," he was elected to the council of a liberal international organization called the League of Peace and Freedom. At its congress, he made a speech proposing the abolition of all States and the institution of a world federation of productive societies. The liberal League was not impressed. Bakunin's own followers were organized into an anarchistic Alliance of Social Democracy. His chief mass-following was among the day labourers and small watchmakers in French Switzerland, but he had smaller groups of followers, largely recruited from the intelligentsia, in Italy, Belgium, and Holland. His influence in Spain was far-reaching, but mysterious and oddly organized.<sup>1</sup> There was little to show for it at international conferences. The ends he had in view were similar to those of Marx: the construction of a classless society; his methods of attaining it were totally different.

While Marx looked for the liberation of the working class to the development of impersonal social forces, guided and taken advantage of by an organized working-class party, or organized working-class movements, Bakunin looked for it in "organized

<sup>1</sup> His friend Fanelli had established sections of the I.W.M.A. in Barcelona. When Bakunin's Alliance of Social Democracy was dissolved in 1869 he enrolled the two Spanish leaders Sentinon and Pellicer into a secret alliance which seems to have acted partly as an independent conspiratorial organization and partly as an anarchist "fraction" within the International. Between 1870 and 1871 he extended the influence of his "fraction" in other parts of Spain.

indiscipline ” and the devoted self-sacrifice of small groups of conspirators. His hatred of any form of authority, whether of Church, State, or Science, made him place his confidence in the revolutionary instincts of an oppressed class, led by heroic persons, anonymous and ruthless, who could appreciate the value of these instincts. He had no use for Marx’s idea of a disciplined proletariat outmanœuvring the capitalists at their own game. At the back of his mind was the notion that natural, primitive man, unperverted by laws and institutions, was virtuous. He visualized the proletariat as the new barbarians, as an angry elementary force which could disintegrate laws and institutions by elemental methods. He regarded the State as the “most flagrant, most cynical, and most complete denial of humanity ” on the grounds that it assumed men to be naturally wicked. His rejection of the State implied also the rejection of political action. Consequently he believed that all forms of government should be boycotted until they were destroyed.

Bakunin’s political career did not conform exactly with his political convictions. He combined criticism of the autocratic methods of the governing body of the International with attempts to form an inner ring of revolutionaries pledged to utter obedience and discipline. His avowed internationalism is marred by sudden freaks of Anti-Semitism. But in spite of the inconsistencies of his actions and the illogicalities of his writings, his influence, which was based largely on his ability to command personal loyalty, was enormous. Naturally enough,



it was strongest in those countries where constitutional agitation was difficult or impossible and where political theory was young. It was in Russia, Italy,<sup>1</sup> and Spain that Bakunin made history.

The hostility that had shown itself at the Basel congress between the Marxist and the Bakuninist groups was inflamed by a more topical controversy. By this time the French Empire had been disastrously defeated in its war with Germany, and the Paris Commune had been crushed in its turn. Although the International played very little part in the Commune Movement—only one of its members, Varlin, occupying a prominent position in it—the General Council set itself to play the part of its defender to the world, and its interpreter to the working-class movement.

Marx drew two important lessons from its failure. Firstly, he pointed out that the working class, when it seized power, must immediately set about substituting for the bourgeois system its own forms of administration and law. Secondly, he showed that a successful revolution must draw its support not only

<sup>1</sup> Italy was the scene of Bakunin's earliest successes. An active branch of his Alliance was founded at Naples in 1868 by his follower Gambuzzi. A couple of years later, groups calling themselves sections of the International, but in fact in touch with Bakunin's group within it, came into being in Milan and Florence. Bakunin's groups came into conflict with Mazzini, who denounced them as anti-national and atheistic. Bakunin riposted, and his attack brought him into contact with those Italian socialists who were bitterly disappointed at the conservative turn Mazzini's policy was taking. Mazzinists and Bakuninists struggled for the control of the Italian workers' movement. The Bakuninists were strengthened by the radical attitude of Garibaldi. In 1871 the first Workers' Fascio was formed in Milan with branches in other towns.



from large industrial towns but from small towns and rural districts as well. Bakunin, on the other hand, made the failure of the Commune a text for a renewed attack on political organization and government as such. He recommended a new pattern of revolution: the setting up of scattered "communes" which, by their successful example, would encourage less revolutionary districts to imitate them.

The failure of the Communard Movement had other consequences which were unfortunate for the International. The French working-class movement was put out of action for several years, and the French Communard exiles who represented it on the General Council brought with them the recriminations that usually arise after an unsuccessful experiment. The German working-class leaders, Bebel and Liebknecht, were imprisoned for having protested against the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine. And in England, the working-class leaders took fright and changed their policy. The Franco-German War had increased English industrial prosperity, and with this prosperity came higher wages and greater liberty for the trade unions. The English section of the International were loth to compromise their present advantages, and as the International grew more radical, they became more cautious.

The London Congress of the International in 1871 took place under these very adverse conditions. The vexed question of political organization was again raised, and the Marxist point of view carried

the day. A more direct attack was made on Bakunin. The General Council was convinced that Bakunin's Alliance of Social Democracy, supposedly dissolved and incorporated in the International in 1868, still continued to exist secretly. A resolution prohibiting the organization of any society with a special programme within the International was passed. At the same time the General Council publicly washed its hands of the "affaire Nechaev."<sup>1</sup>

The partisans of Bakunin now declared open war on the General Council. They accused it of having packed the conference, refused to accept the result of the vote on the question of political organization, and demanded another congress in which to settle the matter. The next congress, which took place at The Hague in September 1872, was fundamentally an all-in struggle for the control of the continental working-class movement. Marx himself was present. The question of political organization was again raised and again settled in a Marxist sense. The existence of a secret Alliance of Social Democracy was proved by documentary evidence, and this time Bakunin and Guillaume, his lieutenant, were expelled from the International. A great deal of mud

<sup>1</sup> The "affaire Nechaev" was a scandal surrounding the murder of a Russian student. It was thought that Nechaev, a young anarchist, had suspected the youth of being an *agent-provocateur* and made away with him. Another version of the story stated that Nechaev had deliberately committed a murder in order to "consolidate" his secret society. Nechaev had been extremely intimate with Bakunin, and went to Russia carrying with him letters of recommendation from Bakunin to anarchist circles. He held extreme nihilist views and there is no doubt that for a short time Bakunin was converted to "pan-destruction" by him, and was responsible for much of the propagandist literature circulated by Nechaev in Russia.

was slung and the antagonisms aroused were real and bitter. Bakunin's expulsion was followed by the retirement of his supporters, and eventually led to the foundation of a rival anarchist International. The old International was broken. It carried on a paper existence in New York for four years, and then shut up shop. But the struggle between Marxism and anarchism, albeit in all sorts of local and modified forms, was carried on all over the civilized world, and is still being waged to-day.

## CHAPTER IV

# SOCIAL-DEMOCRACY IN GERMANY AND RUSSIA

(i)

### EARLY GERMAN SOCIALISM

THE common law of Prussia, completed and brought into force in 1794, recognized the right of the very poor to demand subsistence from the State, and the duty of the State to find employment for its citizens. Hegel's and Fichte's paternal State was in line with Prussian tradition. But the beginning of the nineteenth century in Germany brought with it the popularization of French political and English economic ideas. German industry and trade had been hampered by numberless tolls and privileges of a feudal nature. These were largely abolished in theory in Prussia by the Stein-Hardenberg legislation. This liberal legislation, however, was side-tracked by a reactionary police and bureaucracy. The democratic ferment of 1848 gained much of its impetus from an exasperated middle class which looked reverently towards English economic individualism. But the German revolution was complicated by native factors which made it an excellent nurse to a solid parliamentary socialism.



It combined liberal economic theory with traditions of a paternal state and a socialistic philosophy.

Even before 1848 there were conscious socialists in Germany. We have already mentioned the part played by the Young Hegelians in the international socialist movement. Besides the Young Hegelian philosophers and publicists there arose a political economist or two, Rodbertus was the most important of them, who would advocate some part or other of the socialist programme. Revolts against the introduction of machinery took place, but in Silesia the natural Luddism of the weavers was reinforced by demands which showed that a small fraction of the German working class at any rate had understood the simpler arguments against capitalism. Wilhelm Weitling's agitation touched yet another fraction of the proletariat.

In Prussia, the middle class demanded constitutional government, freedom of the press, religious toleration, and the freedom of association. The working class demanded a Ministry of Labour and the employment of the workless on public works. It is not hard to trace, in the working-class part of the Berlin insurrection, the influence of Stefan Born, printer and member of the Communist League. His attempts, which were fairly successful, to organize purely working-class groups in the defence of their economic interests entitles him to be called the forerunner of the modern German trade union movement.

Marx and his friends pursued their agitation in the industrial Rhineland, where they joined forces with

the local revolutionary leaders, Gottschalk and Willich. Another section of the Communist League, inspired by the poet Herwegh, raised a small armed force which was soon beaten. The Cologne democratic newspaper—the *New Rhenish Gazette*—fell into Marx's hands, and he turned it into an organ so radical that its owners objected and finally stopped their subsidy. Gottschalk had started a Workers' Union in Cologne which was republican and federalist. Marx, who saw very well that the middle-class democratic movement was set fair for a united Germany, opposed Gottschalk on this point, and the Union split itself into two parts, one federalist and one nationalist. At first, Marx endeavoured to transform the middle-class democratic movement into a broader movement based on the working classes. He hoped to turn the national sentiment against Russia and Austria into a national sentiment against reaction. To this end, he supported the nationalist claims of Poland and Hungary. The defeat of the Hungarian revolution and the feeble resistance of the Prussian middle class to the reactionary Prussian Government forced Marx to give up all hope of inspiring a wide national movement which was both democratic and radically progressive. He now turned to the Rhenish workers' movement and devoted his energies to organizing it, giving it a socialist programme, and linking it up with Born's associations. But the change of tactics came too late. The Prussian Government re-took the offensive and Marx was forced to leave. Engels, Willich, and the old

communist veteran, Moll joined the republican insurgents in the south of Germany and shared in their hopeless resistance to superior Government forces.

While the more radical elements taking part in the revolution of 1848 failed in their efforts, it can be said that the constitutional reforms introduced as a result of the agitation did in fact improve the workers' political position. At first they were slow to take advantage of it. A few workers' clubs under liberal patronage were started, and co-operative societies and land-banks were organized by the progressive deputy Schulze-Delitsch. But the years 1852-62 were years of political stagnation as far as the working class was concerned.

In 1862 a brilliant young publicist called Ferdinand Lassalle was asked to lecture to a Berlin working-men's club. He argued that the revolution of 1848 had freed the working class politically and that now their aspirations must be directed towards economic freedom. He was arrested and fined. A workers' committee at Leipzig wrote to him and asked for an outline of his policy. He replied with the famous "Open Letter," and was asked by them again to defend his views publicly before the partisans of Schulze-Delitsch. His lecture was an immediate success. Lassalle organized his Leipzig supporters into a Universal German Working Men's Association to promote his programme of State socialism. For two years he wrote, organized, and held meetings with incredible energy. His movement took hold of the popular imagination and



his Association increased its membership to over 4,000 members. In 1864 he was romantically killed in a duel.

After his death his movement was directed first by Becker and then by Schweitzer. At this time the International Working Men's Association had been established in London, and a prominent member of Lassalle's organization, Wilhelm Liebknecht, joined it and was deeply influenced by Marx. Liebknecht won over his friend Bebel, the president of the Lassallean Association, to the views of the International and together they began to inject the German movement with Marxist ideas. The main difference between the International and the Association was a difference in their attitude to the State. The Association looked to the State to finance non-profit-making production. The International regarded the contemporary State as essentially an instrument of the capitalist class. The State, they held, must become an instrument of the working class before it can be used to further working-class ends. This divergence of views could not be got over, and in 1867 Bebel left the Association to become president of a newly formed organization, the Union of Working Men's Associations.

In 1869, at a workers' congress at Eisenach, the Social-Democratic Labour Party was formed out of Bebel's Union and recruits from the Universal and the Schulze-Delitsch clubs. By 1874 seven members of the Social-Democratic Party and three of the Lassalle Association were returned to the Reichstag by 450,000 votes.



At this point the Government began to attack the socialist organizations and invoked the Association Law of 1850 against them. The rival parties united in misfortune, and at a congress at Gotha in 1875 they accepted a joint programme contrived by Liebknecht and Geib for the social-democrats and Hasenclever and Hassellmann for the Lassalle party. The programme became the basis of an extensive agitation. In 1878, attempts on the Emperor's life gave the Government an opportunity of introducing an anti-socialist Bill, which gave the executive and police very extensive powers. The new laws prohibited the existence or formation of any socialistic or communistic organizations, or any organizations designed to produce a radical change in the nature of the State, or any organizations tending to destroy amity between the classes. It was certainly comprehensive.

Henceforward, the social-democratic agitation was carried on underground and with more success than ever. The socialists in the Reichstag used their parliamentary position to address the whole of Germany through the newspapers. (Bismarck attempted to suppress the publication of parliamentary proceedings, but was defeated.) Meanwhile the social-democrats held secret conferences, published a good and widely read newspaper, and built up strong local organizations. For about a year the united party was embarrassed by an extreme left wing under the leadership of J. J. Most. Most's group was under the influence of that part of the International which professed anarchist-communist

principles. It was overtly revolutionary and even went as far as justifying political murder. It was expelled from the Social-Democratic Party at a clandestine conference held in Switzerland. But this expulsion did the Social-Democratic Party no good, as it was made the scapegoat for any political disorder. The anti-socialist laws, prolonged indefinitely when an anarchist plot against the Imperial family was discovered, assisted socialist propaganda by creating martyrs, and soon after Bismark's dismissal by Wilhelm II in 1890 they were repealed.

The period between 1878 and 1890, the "heroic age" of German socialism, was followed by a peaceful era of reorganization. The "Gotha Programme" was replaced by the "Erfurt Programme." The "Erfurt Programme" declared collectivism as the goal to be reached after a long period of historical evolution, attainable only by the intelligent organized action of the German working class in co-operation with the working class in other lands. It mapped out the political and economic institutions on the basis of which a collectivist system could be set up. But it made no mention either of the materialist conception of history or of the theory of surplus value. It was, in fact, not committed to the special theories of Marx, although it accepted the general lines of his philosophy.

The period up to 1914 saw a remarkable increase in every form of working-class activity. Trade union membership went up enormously. Millions of pounds' worth of merchandise went through the hands of co-operative wholesale and retail societies.

And social-democratic representation in the Reichstag increased.

The social-democrats set themselves arduous duties. They had always been proud of their descent from the earlier middle-class thinkers. "We German socialists," said Engels, "are proud of our descent not only from Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen, but also from Kant, Fichte, and Hegel. The German Labour Movement is the heir of German classical philosophy." They accordingly made themselves the standard-bearers of every enlightened reform movement in the country. The liberal parties of the middle classes were divided by regional and religious differences, and were too weak to push forward the type of legislation recommended by the Liberal Party in England. The Social-Democratic Party in the Reichstag bore on its shoulders not only its responsibility to the working classes, but a duty to the whole great cause of progress. It placed its peculiar imprint on the international socialist movement, reconstituted in Paris in 1899. In Germany suffrage reform, reform of colonial administration, the defence of democratic rights of free speech, assembly, and combination, and all those causes generally championed by the party of the enlightened middle class, were supported by social-democracy, which thus assumed the dual political role of a liberal cum workers' party. Consequently it attracted the votes of that large class of people which is not consciously socialist, but which supports the most progressive candidate in an election.



By 1912 it was, with 110 deputies, the largest single party in the Reichstag. Bebel, its last veteran leader, died in 1913, and was succeeded by Friedrich Ebert. Bebel had been able to maintain the unity of the party. There were three groups: the radicals, who stood for a pure Marxist policy; the centrists, who stood for the unity of the party and whose sentiments were those of the party officials; and the revisionists, led by Eduard Bernstein, who supported an opportunist, more or less Fabian policy. At the last congress held by the party before the war the radicals were defeated on an important issue by 366 votes to 140. But their influence was not negligible, and their tactics at the end of the Great War provide one of the most interesting chapters of socialist history.

(ii)

### THE RUSSIAN SOCIAL MOVEMENT

The vast autocratic empire ruled by the martinet Tsar Nicholas I lacked any machinery for political discussion. His accession had been greeted by disturbances organized by secret societies. Demands had been made for civil liberties, a stable legal system, and the emancipation of the serfs. The organization chiefly responsible for the unrest of 1825 was the underground group that came to be known as the Dekabristi. The leader was one Pestel; their rank and file was chiefly composed of officers and men of leisure, the intelligentsia of the period. This educated upper class, isolated, romantic,



and talented, was open to foreign intellectual influences and jealous of the intellectual freedom of the Western European States. Their attempt to obtain the privileges accorded to their order in France and England was harshly received. Execution and exile was the lot of their leaders and strict measures were taken by the police to circumscribe still further the freedom of the press, of speech, and of meeting. One of the main purposes of the Russian universities was to act as reservoirs from which the government could draw a supply of reliable officials. Consequently the activities of students and professors were closely watched by secret agents of the government.

At the University of Moscow, however, a sort of *esprit frondeur* was maintained. The police were powerless against the disturbing effects of enlightened conversation. Alexander Herzen and his friend Ogarev dominated a social circle, composed of students, professors, and liberal-minded Moscow residents, which read and discussed the writings of the French socialists and of Hegel. Between 1834 and 1839 the circle was leaderless, Herzen and Ogarev having been exiled from Moscow for five years. In the next few years it increased in size and influence so that even after Herzen had been exiled again in 1847, he was able to dispose of his smuggled newspaper, *The Bell* (Kolokol), to a respectably large public.

The failures of the Crimean War brought in a lot of recruits to the cause of reform. Liberals and socialists together were able to force the government

into passing an Act for emancipating the serfs rather quicker than it found comfortable. In 1861 the young democrats and socialists, heartened by their success, decided to press for further concessions. The official attitude immediately stiffened. The vigilance of the police was countered by the formation of a secret society and by riots among the students of St. Petersburg. In 1862 the police closed the Sunday schools and reading clubs established for the poor by the radical intelligentsia.

Meanwhile, in London, Alexander Herzen was puzzled and dismayed when he received the manifesto of a new secret society called "Young Russia." He believed firmly that socialism could be made a possibility in Russia by the steady influencing of public opinion, and regarded active political measures as hopeless under Russian conditions. The active conspiracies of the young radicals, or nihilists as they came to be called, were utterly unsympathetic to this cautious publicist. His partner Ogarev was caught by the enthusiasm of the new movement. Together with Bakunin he helped Nicholas Serno-Solovievich to form the famous secret organization "Land and Liberty." Bakunin's romanticism made him a delighted participant in a routine of codes, false passports, and disguises. But the excited intervention in Russian politics of this temperamental exile damaged the movement severely. His imprudences led to the arrest of Serno-Solovievich and other agents, the imprisonment of the gifted socialist journalist, Chernychevsky, and the renewed vigilance of the

secret police. "Bakunin has ruined his friends with his chatter," sighed Herzen. But even Herzen had to realize that the nihilist societies, insignificant as they were, represented the only *point d'appui* of the socialist exiles in Russia. Rather grudgingly, he published a laudatory account of "Land and Liberty" in *The Bell* of March 1st, 1863, and his newspaper again became the organ of the Russian left wing.

But Herzen's influence on the Russian left was on the wane. His courageous support of the Polish insurrection of 1863 alienated the moderates, while his lukewarm adhesion to "Land and Liberty" made him an object of suspicion to its members. Herzen's faith in democratic institutions seemed to have little bearing on the situation in Russia. The intelligentsia was suffocated by a powerful bureaucracy. It was forced into the same type of political activity as that carried on by the racial minorities of the Austrian Empire: conspiracy, dissemination of illegal literature, diplomatic visits of prominent exiles to European capitals in search of money and political support, and finally, political murder. The nihilists had few positive revolutionary tenets. Fruitless criticism of the régime had grown into the worship of revolution as an absolute good. Although there was little fundamentally in common between the nihilists and Bakunin, Bakunin was ready to pledge his unwitting organization, the Social-Democratic Alliance, to their support. When an emissary of theirs, Sergei Nechaev, came to visit Bakunin in Switzerland, Bakunin backed him morally



and financially. Together with Ogarev, they wrote a series of pamphlets for the movement, which were widely read. Nechaev founded yet another secret society of a violent character, "The People's Justice." When the police made numerous arrests in 1873, they accused eighty-seven persons of connections with a Bakunin-inspired section of the International.<sup>1</sup> Recent research has shown that Bakunin's connections with the Russian Nihilist movement were exceedingly tenuous. He was ready to let his name be used by nihilist organizations, and was flattered by the invitation to draw up manifestos for them. The police regarded Bakunin as a sinister spider set in the midst of a fine revolutionary web. Which delighted Bakunin.

The police drive of 1873 revealed four main divisions among the Narodniks, as the popular parties were loosely called.<sup>2</sup> The chief sections were: (1) The Malikovski—a kind of Russian "quakers"—chiefly concerned with carrying on the work of the social and moral improvement of the poor initiated by the young radicals of the 'forties and 'fifties. (2) The Bakuninists, who advocated political terrorism as a way of achieving the downfall of Tsarism, and who looked forward to a "collective" society based on a federation of agrarian and

<sup>1</sup> A struggling section of the official International, led by one Utin, did exist. It was regarded with suspicion by Bakunin.

<sup>2</sup> The theoretical background of this popular movement was far from consistent, but it can be said that Bakunin and Blanqui were the main intellectual influences on the terrorist section of it, and that the great figures of the Russian "Enlightenment," Herzen and Chernychevsky were, together with Proudhon, the influences on the gradualist sections.



industrial communes. (3) The Lavrists, followers of Professor Peter Lavrov who edited an influential revolutionary journal from Zürich. (4) The St. Petersburg nihilists led by Tchaikovski, the most important and numerous group. All these groups co-operated in Lavrov's campaign of going "into the people," and circulated the same pamphlets. Lavrov's group, however, dissociated itself from the nihilist programme of political terrorism. It demanded the nationalization of land and capital, but repudiated the sentimental nihilist attachment to the native Russian communism of the Mir. It did not believe in the revolutionary rôle of the peasantry, but stressed the importance of "critically thinking individuals." It was, in fact, the most cosmopolitan of the Russian movements.

The severe punishments inflicted on the nihilist groups in 1873-4 altered their programme. They decided to give up the ordinary methods of secretly organized publicity. A campaign of "nihilist colonization" was followed, and agitators went discreetly to live in the country districts and to propagate their doctrines among poor people by word of mouth. Meanwhile Bakuninist sympathizers arranged socialist demonstrations in provincial towns. But the effects of these new moves were small.

The day after the trial of 193 St. Petersburg nihilists had come to an end, Vera Zasulitch, a prominent figure in radical circles, went to visit General Trepoff, the head of the city police. While he was reading through her papers she shot him.

The public sympathy aroused during her trial and the enthusiasm manifested at her acquittal convinced the nihilists that it was now the time to retaliate. Henceforward political persecution was countered by political terrorism in a campaign which culminated in the assassination of the Tsar. At this time the famous nihilist "Executive Committee" was formed at the Congress of Lipetsk: it determined to use dynamite as well as firearms. In spite of the efforts of the police, the terrorists brought off several successful coups. Although few in numbers they were supported by the general dissatisfaction which prevailed as a result of the mismanagement of the Turkish war. According to Stepniak, one of the most active of the underground terrorists, the nihilists felt that their real strength lay in the "revolutionary nation." "Land and Liberty" as a whole did not accept the new terrorist programme without disagreement. In 1879 it broke up into two sectors—the politically minded terrorist section, the "Will of the People" (*Narodnaya Volya*), and an anti-political, not so violent section, the "Black Division" (*Tcherni Perediel*), which pursued an agrarian policy and took no interest in the struggle for constitutional reform. The Lavrists meanwhile remained sceptical about the prospects of an unpolitical agrarian communism based on the traditional customs of the peasantry. They maintained that Russia must first experience a capitalist phase during which the bourgeoisie must rule. In their view, a socialist revolution could only be successfully carried through after the proletariat had become

sufficiently experienced and organized to run large-scale production.

In fact, the industrialization of Russia was proceeding quite rapidly, and at the same time strike organizations made their appearance among the new operatives. The relevance of European social-democracy to the new economic situation was borne in upon the most intelligent Narodniks, and in 1883 a group of these, led by Plekhanov, founded a Society for the Emancipation of Labour. This was a Marxist propaganda group which had little organic connection with the spontaneous workers' organizations. But Marxist ideas were making rapid headway. In 1895, in some respects the birthday-year of Bolshevism, Lenin made his first important appearance on the political stage as the organizer, with the future Menshevik leader Martov, of the Petrograd Union of Struggle for the Emancipation of the Working Class. This organization, the immediate forerunner of the Russian Social-Democratic Party, took an active part in organizing a gigantic strike which took place in the city a year later. Meanwhile, an illegal Social-Democratic Party crept into existence and absorbed the experienced agitators of the Petrograd union and the Narodniks who had come under the influence of Marxist theory. Lenin quickly became the live wire and leading polemist of the party.

The young party was faced with enormous difficulties. Its existence was threatened from without by the Tsarist police and from within by theoretical anarchy and conflicting views on the important



subject of organization. The first step of the party was to adopt the Narodnik policy of "going into the people." It sent its members to study at first hand the conditions obtaining in factories and slums, and won the confidence of the working class by organizing free night schools. So far so good. All sections of the party were agreed as to the absolute necessity of raising the factory workers' educational level. But soon a disagreement arose on a question of organization which involved profound theoretical differences. The point at issue was: whether to lay the greatest emphasis in their work on the economic demands of the working class, or to stress the political conflict against the Tsarist autocracy. Economic or political agitation?

The first alternative, which came to be called Economism, involved a slackening of anti-Tsarist militancy, the democratic participation of factory workers in the party councils, and the possibility of legal agitation. The second alternative meant an illegal and bitter struggle with the government, and the control of the movement by tried revolutionaries. Lenin defended the second line of argument. "We have neither a Parliament nor freedom of assembly," he wrote. "Nevertheless we are able to hold meetings of workmen who wish to listen to a social-democrat. We must, however, manage to hold meetings of all classes desirous of hearing what a democrat has to say. For he who forgets that communists support every revolutionary movement, and that we are therefore bound to make clear to the people the common task of democracy without



for a moment concealing our socialist convictions, is no true social-democrat. Nor is he a social-democrat who forgets his duty to go a step ahead of all others in the formulation, provocation, and solution of every general democratic problem." The alternative programmes held two very different conceptions of the role of the working classes in the coming national struggle for emancipation. The Economists considered that the political struggle should be waged by the middle classes, and that the working classes should restrict their activity to economic demands. The Leninists, while agreeing readily that a middle-class victory in the agitation against the autocracy was absolutely essential for the future of socialism in Russia, urged that the party should actively mobilize the working classes in support of the constitutional demands of the middle classes, in order to broaden the impending "bourgeois" revolution into a popular revolution which would place both industrial workers and peasants in a controlling position from which they could make their demands successfully. While the Economists wished the Social-Democratic Party to develop into a Labour Opposition, the Leninists regarded it as the potential leader of the whole Russian people in their revolt against Tsarism. Consequently, they pressed for a form of organization which would fit it for the part of a general staff in a revolutionary crisis.

In the Congress of the party which was held in London in 1903 the terrain of this battle of ideas changed from general policy to a detail of party

organization. Martov, supported by Trotsky, proposed that membership should be conferred on any person who worked under the general supervision of the party. Lenin proposed that membership should be restricted to those participating in the organization of the party. This was not an academic difference of opinion. Martov's proposal meant in fact the organization of a mass-party with a policy controlled by the industrial workers. Lenin's proposal meant the organization of a closely knit and disciplined committee controlling the political activity of the workers and whatever other group should come under its influence. Lenin's proposal was not inspired by any contempt for the political capacities of the working classes: it was part of his policy to recruit as many members as possible from these classes. It was the natural result of his conviction that the primary aim of the social-democrats was to achieve the middle-class revolution.

A vote was taken on this issue, and Lenin's proposal carried the day by a small majority. The Congress split up into two sections: the Bolsheviks (Majoritarians) under Lenin, and the Mensheviks (Minoritarians) under Martov. In spite of many attempts to restore unity to the party, the breach remains to this day.

The formation of a political party by the Marxists was followed in 1901-2 by the formation of a political party by the advanced Narodnik groups—the Social Revolutionary Party. The social revolutionaries maintained that Russia could pass straight from primitive capitalism to agrarian communism

without experiencing a period of middle - class government. They still retained the Narodnik idea that the village communes were the germs of the new social order. They stood mainly as a party of the peasantry and advocated the socialization of land. Their political methods remained primitive: they still believed in political terrorism. The party regarded themselves as pledged to perform heroic deeds before an audience of passive peasants. Consequently they got few active recruits from the classes they represented and the party remained middle class in composition.

The Russian Revolution of 1905 took all the political parties by surprise. The revelations of administrative incompetence resulting from the failure of the war against Japan encouraged both the industrial workers and the peasants to spontaneous strikes, processions, and demonstrations. Meanwhile the middle-class parties used all their influence to secure a parliament and a constitution. In Petrograd a demonstration of workmen carrying a petition to the Tsar and led by a priest, Father Gapon, was fired upon by the palace troops. A thousand were killed. This senseless action provoked a furious determination throughout Russia, which manifested itself in organized strikes on the part of industrial workers and civil servants, mutinies in the army and navy, and violent peasant risings. But the popular fury lacked cohesion and political direction and soon spent itself. A Duma (parliament) and limited constitution were granted, but these concessions were far too narrow to command



the acquiescence of the radical parties. The police still maintained their sinister powers, and the small measure of civil liberties granted was insufficiently guaranteed.

The abortive revolution produced one phenomenon of singular interest. This was the Petrograd Workers' Soviet, a representative and democratically elected council of workmen from the local factories and workshops. It was the influence of the Mensheviks in the main which led to the creation of the Soviet. The pressure of circumstances, however, forced all the revolutionary parties, with the exception of the debarred anarchists, to join with the non-party revolutionary workmen in the organization of this new entity. The first chairman of the Soviet was a radical lawyer with no party affiliations, called Khrustalov—then the chairmanship passed to a committee of three of whom Trotsky was the most prominent. Lenin at the time did not recognize the full significance of the Soviet. He regarded it as a useful weapon in the struggle for a constitution, but overlooked its potentialities as a new form of industrial democracy. But the Soviet set a revolutionary tradition, and in 1917 Lenin was quick to recognize the importance of the workers' own form of democracy.

The quick march of events in 1905 brought up another problem of political tactics. What would be the character of the provisional government set up after the fall of Tsar Nicholas II? What should be the attitude of the social-democrats towards such a government?



The Mensheviks—this time their spokesman was Martynov—put forward the following views:

1. The revolution is a middle-class one, and will be followed by a middle-class republican government pledged to undertake certain limited reforms.
2. A socialist government is impossible in Russia at present because of the small percentage of factory workers and the backward state of agriculture.
3. The social-democrats should not take part in a provisional government because the advanced workers will identify them with the middle-class politicians and because the middle classes, now in a strong position, will be bound to force them out of the government even if such a course of action involves a return to autocratic methods.
4. The social-democrats, if they wish to avoid both dangers, should therefore oppose the provisional government in the character of a workers' opposition, and leave the task of constitution-making to the middle-class parties.

Martynov, in fact, agreed with that section of the Second International which condemned the French socialist leader, Millerand, for taking part in a middle-class government.

Lenin was strongly opposed to Martynov's policy. His views were of a piece with his former differences with the Menshevik leaders' policies. He refused

to admit that the situation in France held any parallel with the situation in Russia. In Russia, he argued, there was an enormous and potentially revolutionary class lying between the middle classes and the industrial workers, which consisted of the peasantry and the lower middle classes. The social-democrats should champion a revolutionary dictatorship of all the poorer classes, of the majority of the population. Against such an alliance the more reactionary middle-class parties could do nothing. They would be dealing with an embattled nation. A revolutionary dictatorship of all the poorer classes, would not, of course, be able to establish a socialist economy. But it would establish a really wide democratic society which would be the best foundation for future socialist development. Lenin, in fact, condemned the Menshevik view as "utopian." They saw possibilities for socialism only at an end of a long period of industrialization, and then imposed only by a sudden revolt of the factory workers. Lenin foresaw its development by easy stages—from democratic revolution to a revolutionary dictatorship of the poorer classes, from such a dictatorship to a society based on State capitalism in industry and large-scale co-operation in agriculture, from such a society to one based entirely on socialist and co-operative principles which would gradually dispense with the political machinery of the State.

The suppression of the revolution in 1906-7 put a temporary end to these discussions. Lenin, from his place of exile in Galicia, urged his party to make all

possible use of legally permissible propaganda. Meanwhile the organization of an illegal nuclear revolutionary general staff proceeded quietly. In 1914, the outbreak of war revived the revolutionary hopes of the radical parties, and, with them, all the old dissensions in a new form.



## CHAPTER V

### THE EVOLUTION OF THE LABOUR PARTY 1850-1914

THE second stage in the history of British socialism is more confused and less stirring than the first. It will be advisable, for clarity's sake, to give a short historical outline of the main events and movements, and then to go back and pick out the most significant items for further discussion.

The twenty years after the collapse of Chartism saw the enormous extension of Liberal influence, Liberal ways of thinking, and Liberal economic practice. The trade unions benefited from the régime of free trade: Gladstone had a very clear idea of their political power and saw to it that they pursued their aims peacefully and constitutionally. The I.W.M.A., although it obtained at one time the platonic support of the trade union giants, Odger and Cremer, never detached the organized working classes from the Liberal party. While the period of expansion lasted, they identified their class interests with the trade unions and the co-operative shops and left politics to the middle classes. The movement for closer union between trades which had begun in the 'forties under the influence of Owen and Doherty



gained ground, and in 1851 most of the competing crafts of engineers, millwrights, smiths, and pattern-makers were combined into one union under the name of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers. The A.S.E., although it did not solve all the internal difficulties attendant upon the overlapping of trades and crafts, represented nevertheless a great advance in organization. With its levy of a shilling a week, its system of friendly benefits, and its large membership, it represented a definite challenge to the employers. When its members were locked out in 1852 it secured the influential support of the Christian Socialists. Its prestige grew, and its example was followed by the carpenters and tailors a few years later. The object of the unions in the 'fifties and 'sixties was to control the supply of labour. They had accepted the wages fund theory which taught them that since the amount to be paid in wages was a fixed dividend, the only way to increase the quotient was to limit the divisor, i.e. their own number. Hence came their insistence on the maintenance of craft distinctions, which prevented a one-man skilled job being turned into a two-men unskilled one, and their campaign for 100 per cent. trade unionism in the vocations they hoped to control. Their campaign was helped by middle-class sympathizers, such as Frederic Harrison, Professor Beesly, and Tom Hughes, M.P., and together they secured the passing of the Trade Union Act of 1871 which abolished some of the existing legal anomalies regarding workmen's organizations. Certain stupid restrictions, which could be used to prohibit effective combinations, remained,

but in 1875 these were also removed. The campaign to secure these legal reforms had necessitated united action and had encouraged the formation of local trade federations—trades councils—and had brought about the calling of the first Trades Union Congress in 1868.

After the 'seventies, the golden haze thinned out. The pure doctrines of free competition were becoming suspect, and were being attacked by a new school of anti-Liberal writers, Ruskin and Kingsley amongst them. Foreign competition from America and Germany was becoming dangerous, and to meet it capitalist concerns were combining, and squeezing out the small entrepreneur. Economic distress was making itself felt again, and big strikes occurred frequently. Liberal influence was still enormously strong, but some groups succeeded in detaching themselves from it.

First were the land reformers, in practice generally of the left wing of the Liberal party, but developing theories of rent which involved the advocacy of land nationalization. John Stuart Mill's Land Tenure Reform Association included not only such men as John Morley and Sir Charles Dilke, but also Randall Cremer and George Odger. Many of the land reformers called themselves individualists and anti-socialists. They argued that land was *per se* a monopoly, since it is indispensable and cannot be multiplied, and that if, in addition, it is handed over to the control of the few, a dangerous state of affairs is created which can only be remedied by nationalization. But land, and only land, was a proper

subject for State interference. The socialists among the land reformers retorted that the arguments applied to land held good for the monopolies which free competition itself was creating in the form of trusts and syndicates. The Land Reform agitation culminated in the 'eighties with the propaganda tour of the American writer, Henry George. Many intelligent working men who had accepted the principle of land nationalization were ready to accept other socialist principles and joined the S.D.F.

The Social Democratic Federation, a direct descendant of an earlier body, the Democratic Federation, was founded by Henry Hyndman in order to carry on the Chartist tradition and acquaint the working classes with the new continental developments in socialism. Its views were very similar to those of Bronterre O'Brien as far as political action was concerned: it advocated independent political working-class action. Its economic theories were, to begin with, vague. It adopted the basic socialist principles common to all socialist movements, but was not yet clear whether they were to be achieved inside or outside the State. Eventually Hyndman adopted the social-democratic viewpoint of collectivization through State action—the viewpoint of Lassalle. William Morris, on the other hand, adopted the anti-parliamentary and revolutionary point of view and seceded with his friends from the parent body to form the Socialist League. The S.D.F. was the stronger and more influential group, and, after a preliminary setback in the elections in which all its three candidates were badly defeated,



it caught the imagination of the unemployed of London and gained considerable publicity by its Trafalgar Square demonstrations. The S.D.F. never grew into a large organization, but became an "officer producing unit" for the "New Unionism" movement and the I.L.P.

In 1883 a Scottish metaphysician called Thomas Davidson started to address small gatherings of London intellectuals. He was a sincere utopian socialist. When the lecture course ceased, members of his audience decided to continue the meetings; the utopian ideas were dropped, and a new society, the Fabian Society, was formed. It was, at first, primarily a study circle, studying first Marx then the native trade union movement which had sprung into prominence in the Dockers' Strike of 1880. From the first its ideas were influenced by the new "historical" school of sociology, the school of Herbert Spencer and Arnold Toynbee, and it placed great emphasis on the gradual evolution of "collectivist" legislation. The propaganda of its chief officers, Sidney Webb, Bernard Shaw, and Sydney Olivier, gradually won recognition outside London, and when, in 1889, they successfully entered London municipal politics as "Progressive Party" supporters, their reputation was made. The group recognized very soon that it had not the forces to create a new political party on a national scale. It decided, and it was in a good position to do so, as many of its members were borough councillors and civil servants, upon a policy of "permeation," of urging by means of reasoned argument, the national



and local authorities to consider "collectivist" legislation on its own merits.

These methods, research, judicious propaganda, and "permeation"—though excellently suited to a small middle-class metropolitan organization, were not suitable for provincial socialist groups, mainly working class in character. These were too busily engaged in the day-to-day struggle for better standards of life to devote much time to lobbying and detailed research.

The trade unions were still largely in the hands of the Liberals. The big trade unions organized support for "Lib.-Lab." candidates during elections, that is to say for Liberals who were often trade union officers. The S.D.F. attacked them wholeheartedly for declaring a political truce between capital and labour when no such thing existed economically. They represented only a fraction of the workers—the more favoured few—and claimed to speak for the whole class. They had consistently misdirected the efforts of the organized workers, who were engaging themselves in trifling struggles to raise wages when they should be attacking the whole wage system, lock, stock, and barrel. And so on. The S.D.F.'s frontal attack on the whole trade union position did not bring them much support. But new influences were at work inside the unions. The "New Unionist" movement, directed against the exclusive craft organization of the old type of unions, and encouraging the formation of general labour unions, for unskilled and semi-skilled workmen, challenged the authority of the "old gang."

And in Scotland and Yorkshire sporadic attempts at organizing local labour associations against Liberal-Labour had been made since 1887. In 1888 Keir Hardie, Cunninghame Graham, and other local leaders founded the Scottish Labour Party, a party with a programme of radical reform. In 1892 three independent Labour candidates got into Parliament. In 1893 a regular organization, the I.L.P., was formed to oppose all other parties in elections. The I.L.P. held socialist views and its immediate programme was that of the Scottish Labour Party; its difference with the S.D.F. consisted of a more friendly attitude towards the trade unions, which, it hoped, could be "permeated" with an independent class spirit.

After a few years, during which the Liberal position was profoundly shaken by events in the South African War, and during which trade unionist complacency was severely disturbed by the Taff Vale decision which curtailed the right of picketing and annulled the trade unions' freedom from collective responsibility, it became clear that a wider organization was necessary. The Trades Union Congress of 1899 adopted a resolution recommending a conference of trade union, co-operative, and socialist bodies which was "to devise ways and means for the securing of an increased number of Labour members to the next Parliament." A new wind was blowing. A conference was in fact called, and the members of the I.L.P., the S.D.F., and the Fabian Society, who were present, impressed their point of view upon the reluctant trade unionists. A

federation of trade union and socialist organizations, the Labour Representation Committee, was formed, and after six years of existence sent twenty-nine members to Westminster in the great strike year of 1906. The L.R.C., at last a not inconsiderable element in politics, now came forward as the Labour Party, and pursued in Parliament a fairly successful agitation for favourable trade union legislation. It was not yet a socialist party, although a current of State-socialism underlay its parliamentary utterances. Its creed was simply "labourism"—independent working-class politics—and any deviation from it towards open socialism was sure to cause panic among the trade union leaders.

It was just this cautiousness, imposed by the trade union leaders, that alienated the militant rank-and-filers from the new Labour Party, and made them receptive to the newer doctrines of syndicalism. They were at first taken up by a group of Scottish socialists, who received them from the American Daniel de Leon and the I.W.W. Subsequently Tom Mann introduced the theories on which the French C.G.T. was based to the trade unionist public. The main idea underlying the propaganda of the Industrial Syndicalist Educational League was the class struggle expressed in terms of the general strike and direct action. The Chartist Benbow reappeared in Tom Mann. Parliamentarism, it was held, should not be altogether abandoned, but subordinated to economic action. Behind every Labour M.P. must stand the strict and strenuous figure of the revolutionary trade union leader. The M.P. should not



be allowed to run away with the idea that State socialism was a panacea; for nationalization and municipalization could not release the workers from the stranglehold of the capitalists. The idea of State socialism must be replaced by the idea of workers' control.

Revolutionary syndicalism was one of the factors which contributed to the "Labour Unrest," the series of mass strikes which convulsed the country from 1910 to 1914. In the year 1912 over a million workpeople were involved in trade disputes, and many of them manifested a distinct social revolutionary character. Mann and Robert Smillie took the leadership of the movement out of the hands of the regular leaders. Larkin and Connolly in Ireland laid the foundation of the remarkable alliance between Irish Labour and Sinn Fein. The upheaval, though apparently defeated, and deflected by the war danger, had a lasting result on the history of British socialism. For it originated the scheme of industrial alliances between the great unions, a scheme which was revived in the 'twenties, and which always exercises an influence on militant trade union thought. And the post-war Coal Commission, created under the menace of a political general strike, demonstrated the educative effect of the syndicalist agitation on the mining population.

Without a doubt the two main points of interest in this period are: (1) the influence of the small Fabian Society on the Labour movement; (2) the relations between the Labour and Liberal parties



after 1906, which, as we have seen, provoked a militant movement in the unions.

The views of the Fabian Society, clearly expressed in its "Fabian Tracts," rest on a critique of Marx from a historical standpoint. Marx's theories, argues Sidney Webb, are perfectly adequate for his period, and epitomize its conditions with astonishing clarity. But between 1865 and 1885 Great Britain passed through a period of change. One of the main factors in this change was trade union organization, which obtained for the working classes a clearly recognized position in the State. After 1867, Great Britain had become a democracy, and the working classes had an opportunity to influence legislation directly. At the same time the State itself was undergoing a change of function. It was no longer merely the highest organization of the possessing classes, although it retained that character partially. It was taking upon itself duties of social reform and the provision of social services. Marx's analysis had been correct for the pre-democratic era, for then the prime necessity had been to sweep away the old State in order to create a new mechanism which could reorganize society on a collectivist basis. But since then the situation had changed. It was not admissible to regard the democratic State evolving, under popular pressure, towards collectivism, from the standpoint of the revolutionary class struggle. The new situation needed new political methods. The political mechanism already existed in the British Constitution: it needed only to be used. The next step was a Labour Government,

which should extend democracy from politics into industry.

Marx's class-struggle theory derives logically from his theory of surplus value. Webb's theory of social evolution derives from his theory of rent, a development of Mill's land reform speculations. One main characteristic, he remarks, is observable in every form of society. As soon as society is efficient enough to produce more than it needs for subsistence, there is a struggle for the surplus product. The most powerful social class makes use of its power to secure the surplus product and leaves the rest of the community to live at the current rate of subsistence. The surplus product possesses the character of rent. In land, fertility, the presence of minerals, and location, make one piece of it more advantageous to own than another. The difference in advantageousness accounts for what is known as "economic rent." Under a system of private ownership and free competition, the man in a superior economic position is able to retain for himself the whole differential advantage. The law of rent holds good in industry too, where the same diversity in advantage is visible. As wages and prices are determined by marginal labour, the differential advantage of efficient and favourably placed enterprises consists of a very high industrial "rent," the largest part of which is unearned increment, since the differential advantage is not the result of the capitalists' efforts, and their reward bears no relation to their services.

The aim of socialism is to place this differential

advantage in the hands of the community. This does not imply that the distribution of the produce of organized society should be made on a basis of equality. For while every worker should receive a minimum which would allow him a civilized existence, the abler worker is entitled to a "rent of ability."

Therefore (1) the struggle for political power is not between the industrial proletariat and the capitalist entrepreneur, but between the majority of the nation—all those who work manually or mentally, who make scientific inventions, who are engaged in intellectual research, who organize industry and government—and the appropriator of differential rent; (2) differential rent, the result of social labour, should be socially distributed; (3) the government should distribute it partly by taxation, partly by municipalization and nationalization.

The advantage of Fabian over Marxist socialism, from the point of view of British labour, was its thoroughly legal methods, and its use of already existing organizations. The Fabian philosophy made possible the slow weaning of the working-class leaders from liberalism to gradualist socialism. It also secured for the Labour movement the adhesion of middle-class intellectuals, who gave it such a precocious political maturity that it was in a position to exercise supreme power eighteen years after its political organization came into being.

In a sense the Fabian policy of indirect influence and permeation achieved results between 1906 and 1913. The presence of a compact Labour group in



Parliament startled the Liberals into action. Mr. Lloyd George set out to steal the thunder from the Labour men. The reform measures passed by the Liberal Government were remarkably and consistently Fabian—the Trade Disputes Act, 1906; Workmen's Compensation Act, 1907; Old Age Pension Act, 1908; Miners' Eight Hours Act, 1908; Trade Boards Act, 1909; National Insurance Act, 1911; Coal Mines Act, 1912; Parliament Act, 1912; and the Trade Union Act, 1913, left the Labour men smiling in their benches. Since the reforms were carried out in the teeth of a threatening Tory party, the Labour party spent much of its time voting with the Liberals. Why were they criticized for doing so? Chiefly because an awkward gap between wages and prices appeared, and the Liberals could not charm it away. Nor could the Labour Party have done so, as it had its roots in the conditions of international trade. Still, the discrepancy between social reform and the current standard of living made for criticism of "the system," and encouraged the supporters of direct action.

There is no doubt that the virtual Liberal-Labour alliance isolated the Labour Party from the masses; so much so, in fact, that the masses active in the "Labour Unrest" fought under leaders of their own choosing. One result of this isolation was to bring the dispossessed trade union leaders into closer touch with the Labour Party, which they recognized at last as something in their own tradition of legality and compromise. The trade union leaders remained



at the stage of cautious reformism long after the rank and file of the local Labour Parties were intelligently discussing socialist theory and practice, and when the safe buffer of liberalism disappeared they replaced it as far as they could by the Labour Party. But such a caution is natural, and always obtains the support of half and more than half of the organized workers. For the trade unions were evolving, on a Fabian pattern, into the great national institutions for social insurance. The great Liberal reforms had incorporated them, embedded them almost, into the changing British Constitution. They had everything to lose from social revolution and economic insecurity. It was not a "betrayal" of socialist principles, but a consciousness of their role within capitalist democracy which prompted them to sign the Mond-Turner agreement.

The Mond-Turner agreement of 1928, whose ratification was largely due to the efforts of Walter Citrine, recognized the trade unions as partners with the employers' federations in the work of industrial reorganization, and provided machinery for the peaceful settlement of disputes. It was the trade union interpretation of "the inevitability of gradualism," and a direct result of the educative experiences of 1906-13.

## CHAPTER VI

# INTERNATIONAL SOCIALISM AND THE GREAT WAR

1914-21

THE title of this chapter is not such a *lucus a non lucendo* as it seems. For although the Second International of 1889 ceased to function after the outbreak of war, various currents of international opinion continued to exist.

The position of the Second International just before the Great War was extremely delicate. Up to the very outbreak of the war, its international congresses and affiliated parties passed pacific and internationalist resolutions and sanctioned party propaganda of a thoroughly orthodox Marxist character. But its effective power was really very small—and would have remained small even if the social-democratic parties had been led by determined revolutionaries. In Japan, Turkey, the United States and Great Britain no strong socialist organization existed at all. Only a small section of the British trade union movement was consciously socialist. The rest of it was prepared to accept the socialist “uplift” phraseology in which social reform agitation was often couched without enquiring

too closely into its theoretical implications. In France, Italy, and the Austrian Empire, organized socialists were a minority of the population. In Russia, although the socialist forces were potentially fairly strong, the autocratic government could easily control them. In Germany, although the Social-Democratic Party had the support of a third of the votes, it found itself unable to act decisively, partly because it was faced by a strong coalition of the "bourgeois" parties and opposed by the military leaders, and partly because its apparent unity hid divergent views or a lack of them.

The outbreak of war, in one sense, clarified the position of the Second International. It had to decide whether the Marxist theory of class struggle, accepted by the majority of its members, was to be interpreted literally, whether it was to be regarded as a merely platonic affirmation of long-term principles, or whether the theory needed drastic revision. These three attitudes towards Marxist theory, as well as minor divergences from them and compromises between them, all found expression within the Second International. Let us label them for the sake of convenience, fundamentalism, utopianism, and revisionism.

The contradiction between theory and practice within the Second International arose, really, from one circumstance. Most of the parties within it accepted the existence of the "bourgeois" State and directed their energies towards the improvement of the position of the working class inside its framework. How was this attitude to be theoretically



justified in the face of the Marxist view that the "bourgeois" State was not an impartial instrument of arbitration between conflicting interests, but an instrument of class domination, used, as occasion warranted, to coerce the working class or to defend the privileged position of the ruling class? One way out of the impasse was to confess that Marxist ideology was out of date, and to concentrate on the winning of reforms beneficial to the working class. This attitude implied a willingness to accept the co-operation of progressive middle-class groups, and an alacrity to take part in "bourgeois" cabinets. It implied a total rejection of offensive revolutionary methods. It implied, also, the belief, founded on a re-examination of capitalist economy, that socialism could best be achieved by a slow process of infiltration which would finally result in the transformation, in the socialist direction, of the machinery of government. From this attitude there naturally followed a two-fold reliance, on the State as an instrument capable of reacting to progressive tendencies, and on the trade union and co-operative movements as the organs best fitted to maintain and extend the pressure of working-class demands upon the "bourgeois" State. This position, the revisionist position, is best exemplified in the group led by Eduard Bernstein in Germany, and in the Fabian Society, which strongly influenced the leaders of the British trade union movement.

Another way out, the utopian way out, was adopted by the majority of the leaders of the Second International, and in particular by the



leaders of the German social-democracy. This tendency implied the continued use of the old revolutionary catchwords, the concentration, in agitation, on final aims, and the rejection of middle-class collaboration. Simultaneously, it ruled immediate or near-future revolutionary action out of practical politics and regarded the piecemeal concessions won by the trade unions with a benevolent eye. This policy had one definite psychological advantage. It exploited the militancy and class consciousness of the socialist workmen. But its practical advantages were none, for in times of political crises it allowed neither revolutionary nor reformist action to be taken. It ruled out revolutionary action because it refused to take such a course unless socialism could command a complete parliamentary majority in the country; it likewise ruled out reformist action as it refused, in the interests of class militancy, to contemplate any compromise with middle-class groups. Consequently, it placed, in point of time, the achievement of socialist aims in the distant, comfortable, and utopian future. The net psychological result of this policy was militancy among the rank and file of the socialist movement, and secret caution among its leaders—for the postponement of revolutionary action to the far future never conduces to present daring.

A "fundamentalist" group, in the sense of a group aiming at the fulfilment of the middle-class democratic revolution by violent methods, as a prelude to the establishment of economic equality

of opportunity, and within a measurable period of time, only existed in the Russian Bolshevik Party. We have already pointed out that in Russia this "fundamentalist" party aimed at a national revolution in alliance with lower-class and peasant elements. It was frankly directed against the whole structure of the Tsarist State, but admitted into alliance lower-middle-class groups whose aims were truly revolutionary, i.e. anti-State.<sup>1</sup>

The difficulty of applying the Russian policy to the Western European scene, where the peasants were not by any means all potentially revolutionary and where peasant land-hunger had to some extent been gratified, led to the formation of a small "fundamentalist" group with a divergent policy. This group accepted the Marxist critique of capitalist development, and held that the contradictions within capitalist economy, previously manifested in crises of over-production, would soon openly proclaim themselves in destructive wars, and numerous economic convulsions. These violent happenings would destroy the lower middle class as an entity: the survivors would, if they weathered the storm, attach themselves to the bourgeoisie, while the pauperized remnants would sink into the proletariat. Consequently, the revolutionaries in the developed capitalist countries would be wasting their time if they sought an alliance with the lower

<sup>1</sup> A similar revolutionary programme had been temporarily envisaged by the German social-democrat, Wilhelm Liebknecht. Between 1866-70 he had considered entering into a revolutionary alliance with the liberal *grossdeutsche* (anti-Prussian) parties against Bismarck's Junker Government.

middle class. The social revolution could only be carried out by the socialist workmen—by the real revolutionary proletariat. The fatalist view that the wholesale collapse of world capitalism was imminent led, logically, to the rejection of the defensive tactic of the dictatorship of the proletariat held by Lenin and the Bolshevik Party, and to the rejection of Lenin's view that it was necessary to organize a centralized "general staff" party to direct discontent into actively anti-capitalist channels. It led also to the rejection of the idea that national revolutions were still possible in alliance with the peasantry. The theorists of this group, and its leaders were the "Spartacists," Rosa Luxemburg and Karl Liebknecht, believed that the revolution would be the outcome of spontaneous action on the part of the workers—not in one country alone, as the collapse of capitalism would be universal, but all over the world. The sympathy of Leon Trotsky, leader of a dissident Left Menshevik group in Russia, with some of these views was fairly explicit in the pre-war period.

In August 1914 the socialist parties of Germany, France, Austria and Belgium prepared to collaborate with their "bourgeois" governments in the task of national defence. The Western European trade union movements agreed to co-operate with their governments and received in return certain limited guarantees which would enable them to maintain a semi-independent position within the State. The war naturally brought in its train a greater centralization of government and a limitation of democracy. The socialist parties which had



adhered to the political truce declared in the belligerent countries found themselves, as they might have expected, in a disadvantageous position. Any attempt on their part to act in the interest of the working class, when this interest conflicted with the immediate policy of their governments, was taken up by the huge war propaganda machine which had grown up overnight and denounced as unpatriotic. The world was treated to the curious spectacle of labour leaders sitting side by side on recruiting platforms with those conservative politicians with whom they had been arguing hammer and tongs a few months before.

The situation did not pass without bitter comment. In Germany, the revisionist Bernstein and the "left" utopian Karl Kautsky opposed the party leaders, gaining support both in the Reichstag and within the trade union movement. In France the Socialist Party "left" was temporarily stunned by the presence of German troops on their soil and by the assassination of the socialist leader Jaurès. But during 1915 a critical attitude grew up under the leadership of Longuet, Marx's son-in-law, and the extreme left socialist Loriot. In England, a small section of the Labour Party, the I.L.P., maintained a persistent and unpopular agitation under the leadership of Ramsay MacDonald. In Austria, where, as in other countries, the majority of the socialists supported the government, the violent repression of "left" elements in the party led to the fantastic assassination of the premier, Count Stürgkh, by Friedrich Adler in a public restaurant.



Lenin's reaction to the apparent treachery on the part of the Second International was typical. He labelled the collaborationist socialists, "Social-Chauvinists" and attacked them freely in the press. There seems to have been little doubt that Lenin had been deceived by the revolutionary phraseology of the "utopian" elements, and his bitterness was increased by his deception. He now sought an explanation of the retreat of the "utopians" in terms which would give a revolutionary lead both to Russian and European socialists. His theory, in brief, was this: the bourgeoisie, in particular the bourgeoisie of imperialist countries, was able to sacrifice a part of its profits in the form of higher wages for skilled workmen. The privileged position of the skilled workmen turned them into a class apart, an "aristocracy of labour" dependent upon the success of capitalist enterprise in their several countries. This "aristocracy of labour" controlled the social-democratic parties and the trade unions, and the moral failure of the Second International was a reflection of their mentality. The real revolutionary class was to be found in the mass of poorly-paid workmen; therefore the "pure" militant socialists must turn to these for support.

Although this analysis was unquestionably sound, it was extremely hard to give it practical application. If the fundamentalist socialists were to act upon it, they would find themselves in the futile position of discouraging trade union activity because it led to a higher standard of life for the working class. And this would have been tantamount to

suicide. It was impossible advice to follow in a highly industrialized country, and it was only advanced by Lenin because he saw the European situation in the light of the coming revolution in Russia.

Lenin maintained that the war could have been prevented if the social-democratic parties had broken with the "social-chauvinists" and the trade union "aristocracy." He instanced the Italian party as a good example of fundamentalist firmness, and compared its actions with those of the Bolshevik Party, which had repudiated the "social-chauvinist" Mensheviks before the outbreak of war. But he sadly misinterpreted the real nature of the Italian party. True, it had excluded the "social-chauvinists" Bissolati and Mussolini, but in composition it was as mixed as the German Social-Democratic Party. It was mainly composed of revisionists and utopians, and the reason for its pacifist attitude lay in the fact that the mass of middle-class opinion was as yet against participation in the war, and that an important section of it always remained pacifist. It could, in fact, afford to be pacifist as long as a section of the ruling class held anti-Entente views. It was only in the post-war revolutionary period that the cracks in this apparently fundamentalist whited sepulchre could be seen.

His attack on the utopian and revisionist Second International led Lenin to agitate for a new, fundamentalist, Third International. But the elements which could be forged into a new International were very diverse. One group, under the theoretical

leadership of Kautsky, wanted to break the political truce in order to press for immediate peace negotiations. It was composed of revisionists or sincere utopians who did not consider revolutionary action practicable. The other fundamentalist group directed by Rosa Luxemburg were anxious for the socialist movement to resume independent political action, but could not agree with Lenin that the foundation of a new International was necessary, or that the revolutionary working class should organize for civil war. Lenin's slogan, "Turn the imperialist war into a civil war," could not be well received by a party waiting to take advantage of a close inevitable catastrophe. These dissident groups met in unofficial conference at Zimmerwald and Kienthal in 1915 and 1916, established a skeleton International bureau which was to keep alive the "pure" spirit of socialism, but could not agree among themselves to detach themselves from the Second International. The Spartacists were bored with the ineffective conferences. Lenin, on the other hand, was furious. Vitriol dripped from his pen. He denounced not only the "social-chauvinists" in Russia and abroad, but the "Kautskyists" and their pacifist twaddle—which could only strengthen Imperialism—and their dangerous attempt to link the "real revolutionary masses" with the "labour aristocracy" to the detriment of the former.

What was happening in Russia? Two years of modern warfare had disorganized the whole economic life of the country. In spite of Entente help,



the primitive organization of Tsarist Russia began to crack. Machinery and rolling stock wore out, but could not be replaced as factory workers had been sent to the front. Food grew scarce and could not be transported because of the inefficiency of the railway system. The peasantry and the soldiery grew war-weary. Meanwhile the middle classes, with their eyes on Constantinople, had realized that the war could only be successfully prosecuted if the Tsarist system of government were abolished. Thus it came about that in March 1917 the Tsardom was abolished by soldiers, workers and peasants hungry for "peace and bread" in alliance with a middle class hungry for conquests and rational government.

The political expression of the middle class was the Liberal Duma Committee. The rallying point of the soldiers and workers was the Petrograd Soviet set up in accordance with the tradition of 1905.

The part played by socialist organizations in national defence needs more detailed explanation, especially in the light of the present international situation. The arguments for "national union" were as weighty and plausible in 1914 as they are to-day.

In the first place, there was the prudential argument. Sabotage of military preparations would certainly have led to police activity against labour organizations. The Western labour movement was built upon open, mass organizations specially constituted to defend the day-to-day material interests of the working class, and, as such, they were particularly vulnerable to hostile action by the State.



It was natural enough for trade unionists to be chary of sacrificing the existence of organizations formed only after decades of patient uphill work to a principle which offered only a fifty-fifty chance of success. Modern war, while it lays the working class open to extraordinary privations and dangers, also increases its indispensability in the eyes of governments. This circumstance gives it, wherever its trade union organization remains strong and intact, a greater bargaining power, particularly in the period immediately after a war, when, reinforced by the popular reaction against the military strait-jacket the people as a whole have been forced to wear, it can obtain economic and political concessions of great importance.

In the second place, individual national considerations played an important part in every country. In Belgium and France, the part played by Anglo-French finance in the period of tension before 1914 was not so obvious to the working class as the fact that a German victory would have meant the victory of the autocratic idea, and the loss of those dearly won constitutional liberties which had given trade unionism a place in the sun. Similar considerations prevailed in England. In Germany and Austria the policy of the military leaders was forgotten and the menace of a backward Pan-Slav imperialism remembered. In Russia it was more difficult for the socialists to contrast their government favourably with that of their enemies, but a large number of socialists under Plekhanov managed to support their government on the grounds that

its alliance with the western democracies would sooner or later modify it. With the exception of Russia, where the internal situation was unique, the socialist leaders cannot fairly be accused of leading their followers by the nose into war. Their solid loyalty to their own trade union organizations inclined the majority of the working class in the belligerent countries to take up a patriotic attitude, very often in the face of their leaders. It could only be possible to persuade the working class to work for the *defeat* of their country in countries where it had no organization to maintain, or where its position was so very unfavourable, even at the outset, that defeat would have inevitably brought about an immediate alleviation of its condition.

It must be remembered that the majority of socialist leaders who supported their own governments in the prosecution of war made perfectly sincere attempts to achieve peace at the first opportunity. And here they had the support of humanitarian liberals. Those "utopians" who had become "social-patriots" found themselves in the same "reformist" camp as Briand, the German democratic and Catholic parties, and, as the war dragged on, as the Society of Friends. It was those socialists whose historical materialism was only skin-deep, and whose fundamental political instinct was moral rather than scientific, who regarded the war with the greatest disgust and personal shame.

While it can be said that the "patriotic" socialists had strong justifications for their line of action, that the situation within the Second International and

the extraordinary confusion of the issues involved in the war led them almost inevitably into the policy of "national union," their attitude during the war towards imperial problems can only be described as rottenly weak. While groups of socialists in England, France, Belgium, and Germany devoted a great deal of thought and research to them, their efforts were somehow never assimilated by the labour movements in their countries. To that extent, international socialism had unconsciously surrendered to "bourgeois" influences. To that extent Lenin's criticisms were not only correct, but prophetic. For in imperialist countries, the problems of foreign policy, imperial policy, and military strategy, are intimately connected, and a labour movement which does not recognize that the uncomfortable issues involved in the liberation of colonial peoples must be faced squarely and thoughtfully condemns itself to the role of a mere arm-chair opposition when questions of foreign policy and military strategy are discussed, or to that of a good-natured, old-fashioned, but essentially ineffective party of liberal reform when it achieves a parliamentary majority.

The situation in countries which came late into the war was rather different, for in them it was possible to take the view that the country concerned might have kept out altogether. (Indeed, even in England that was the view held by the I.L.P. and by some sections of Liberal opinion, and in Scotland, where a religious aversion to war had always been strong, it was possible for an anti-war movement of a socialist complexion to gain considerable support.) In Japan



socialism was practically non-existent. But in Bulgaria there was a labour movement, strongly influenced by Bolshevik ideas, and of considerable importance. In Bulgaria, as in parts of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, the internal situation, as far as the labour movement was concerned, was rather similar to Russia's. Although Bulgaria was not a police state to the extent that Russia was, and although liberal institutions existed, personal liberty was often seriously menaced by State intervention. So the labour movement did not have much to lose by opposing the government. At the same time, the anti-war section of the labour movement, led by Blagoyev and the Tesnyaki ("narrow ones"), could count on the temporary support of a radical anti-war peasant movement led by Stamboulisky. Had Blagoyev possessed Lenin's imagination, he could have co-operated with Stamboulisky in September 1918 to secure a democratic agrarian republic as a first step towards a socialist State. But Blagoyev—an orthodox Marxist—regarded Stamboulisky's movement as essentially reactionary and refused to consider republicanism as a serious movement. Stamboulisky was left to face the government alone, and the government, with the help of the Macedonian refugees—pro-war naturally enough because their territory had been invaded by the Serbs—was able to check the agrarian revolt. The refusal of the Tesnyaki to co-operate with the peasants completely abolished the possibility of establishing a democratic régime based on the poor of both town and country. Of course the issue of

monarchy versus republic *was* neither here nor there, but that cannot absolve the Tesnyaki, later to become the Bulgarian Communist Party, from the responsibility of allowing the peasant movement to founder on the rocks of its own naïveté. This story is that of a “fundamentalist” socialist party faced by a situation which was child’s play compared to that faced by the Bolshevik Party—a unique opportunity for a “national” revolution in alliance with the peasantry and the war-weary soldiery—and faced only by a very small middle class—but of a party whose “fundamentalism” was historically out of focus.

In the U.S.A. the small socialist party led by Eugene Debs naturally stood for peace, and only a minority of its leaders followed Wilson into the war. The Socialist Party was “utopian” in character, and the radicalism of its utterances can be traced to the fact that it represented the interests of the poorer immigrants rather than those of American-born workers. In the Far West, the I.W.W., an anarcho-syndicalist organization chiefly appealing to unskilled labourers, under William Haywood’s leadership, made anti-militarist propaganda. But the vast majority of American workers organized in the conservative American Federation of Labour followed Wilson without being even aware of the socialist arguments for or against the participation in the war. The excitement aroused by the Russian revolution turned the anti-war socialists to the left. The extreme left broke off to form the Communist Party of America. At the end of the war, all socialists, right, left, and middle, found themselves

subjected to a hysterical persecution of everything "red." The parties were scattered: their leaders imprisoned or deported. For the time being, the precocious and ultra-theoretical socialism of America was submerged. It had to wait several years, until severe crises, anti-immigration laws, and a severe drop in the standard of living demonstrated that the days of "rugged individualism" and pioneering hopes were over. When it emerged, American capitalism had passed from its charmed youth to a worried middle age, subject to all the contradictions and fluctuations of its European elder brother. The distinction between the impoverished "wop" or "bohunk" casual labourer and the American A.F. of L. man with his Ford car and neat apartment was breaking down. Unemployment performed the necessary introductions. It was just beginning to be possible for socialism to find a more popular, and more national, basis. Its herald was a more radical trade unionism, the trade unionism of Lewis's C.I.O. Just now, it is starting all over again from the *point de départ* of late Victorian socialism in England, making much the same achievements and mistakes—with the only but important difference—that to its left it has a small but active Communist Party pledged to a "popular front" policy. And in American terms, this is a "farmer-labour" policy, a policy ultimately, of "national" rather than proletarian revolution.

The connection between movements of national liberation and social revolution became closer towards the end of the war. The collapse of Russian



autocracy gave a nationalist colour to the Polish revolution. In the Succession States of the Austro-Hungarian Empire the post-war revolutionary movement sometimes found itself at odds with the nationalist movement of the middle classes, and sometimes found itself in temporary alliance with it. In every case, however, national sentiment was victorious over socialist sentiment, and the depressing history of post-war socialism in Central Europe and the new Baltic States reveals that the old workers' parties had gravely underestimated the appeal of nationalism to all classes. An examination of events in Czechoslovakia, Poland,<sup>1</sup> Hungary, and Finland, will illustrate the extreme complexity of the issues the socialists had to face.

The national theme was unexpectedly revived in Italy. The attitude of the Italian socialists during the war has already been touched upon. At the end of the war, Italy was in the position of a vanquished rather than a victor nation. The war had made too

<sup>1</sup> The Polish labour movement was divided into two sections: the Polish socialist party led by Pilsudski, which was nationalist and reformist, and had the support of the trade unions and a part of the "intelligentsia," and Rosa Luxemburg's Social-democracy of the Kingdoms of Poland and Lithuania, which was indifferent to the national issue, and co-operated with the revolutionary parties of the tyrant-country, Russia. Pilsudski's party had contributed a great deal to the achievement of Polish national unity: it was well regarded by parties to the right of it, and it could, if it chose, enter mixed cabinets of "national unity." Rosa Luxemburg's party was a revolutionary and fundamentalist party: it refused to co-operate with the bourgeois parties in the task of industrial reconstruction (on a capitalist basis, of course) and attacked Pilsudski and his trade unionists. Pilsudski's *coup d'état* in 1925 was actively supported by the patriotic socialists, who were later surprised to find that their hostility to Rosa Luxemburg's party had allowed a reactionary dictatorship to set itself up over their heads.

great demands on her internal economy. The masses were disillusioned and angry. Patriotic expansionist aims had not been satisfied, and at the same time the cost of living rose enormously. Popular dissatisfaction broke out in various ways, most of them violent. There were many peasant risings, chiefly supported by the Catholic popular parties, and to a smaller extent by Malatesta's peasant anarchists. The Socialist Party, confused by theoretical divergences, took little part in the agrarian movement. At the same time the country was swept by industrial strikes, and in these the socialists played a more conspicuous part.

In 1920 the socialists were the strongest party in the country. The right wing of the movement, under Turati, wanted to form a coalition cabinet with the liberal parties. The majority of the party, under Serrati and Lazzari, repudiated the idea on purist "utopian" grounds. Thus an extraordinary situation arose, in which the strongest party in Italy handed over the government to the unpopular and discredited liberals. An abdication of this sort would have made sense if Serrati's group had been intending to make a revolution. But the only revolutionary group within the socialist movement was a small and not very influential communist and "fundamentalist" group under the leadership of Bordiga.

The unpopularity of the liberal cabinet intensified the prevailing anarchy in Italy. The situation was becoming revolutionary, and yet there was no party of the left strong enough or determined enough to



control the situation. In August 1920, the engineers' union declared for a policy of passive resistance to enforce a demand for a rise in wages. The employers, at the end of their tether, riposted with a lock-out. Then a strange thing happened. The engineers were up against it financially, so to counter the employers' move they staged the first big stay-in strike in socialist history. Some of the factories started production, and for a few days, until supplies of raw material gave out, the stay-in strike took on the colour of expropriation. The movement spread, and was supported by the strong anarchosyndicalist minority in the trade union movement which, naturally enough, was glad to support any strike which looked like turning into a movement for producers' control.

But the socialist trade union leaders were quite unprepared for this sort of thing. They negotiated with the liberal government and called off the strike. At the same time the Socialist Party was paralysed by internal divisions. The utopian wing of the party had secured its affiliation to the Third International. The Third International demanded the exclusion of the revisionist wing of the party under Turati, on the grounds that it was not revolutionary—which indeed it was not—and that it supported a policy of class collaboration. The trade union movement, the chief strength of the party, was, with the exception of the anarcho-syndicalists, Bordiga's followers, and a group in Turin, similarly set against an out-and-out class war policy. After the failure of the strike movement,



revolution was farther away than ever. Serrati had been away in Moscow. Now he returned very angry with the Third International. It seemed to him that the Third International's insistence on a revolutionary policy at this juncture would mean either the exclusion of the majority of the trade unionists or the secession of the party as a whole. Attempts at negotiation were made, but the Third International remained adamant in its decision to disown the non-revolutionary majority of the party. At the party conference at Leghorn in February 1921 the bulk of the Socialist Party left the Third International, leaving only the Bordiga and Turin groups to continue their allegiance.

So it came about that at the very moment when the united strength of the socialist movement was needed to repel the frightened reaction to the strike movement, the socialist forces were split into three quarrelling parties. Mussolini and his fascists were able to gain support not only from the conservative nationalists but from plenty of workmen who were tired of the confusion within the socialist movement. The situation was ideal for a nationalist party with pseudo-socialist slogans. It made the most of it.

Let us now turn to the history of socialism in the vanquished countries.

As the war drew to a close, a pacifist movement swept the whole German nation. It involved not only the working classes; it included the conservative Bavarian peasantry and many sections of the middle classes. The majority of the social-democratic leaders, however, maintained a patriotic

attitude. The pacifist workmen, consequently, were cut off from their natural leaders. A new socialist party, the U.S.P. (Independent Social-Democrats), formed out of those advanced utopian elements which had resisted the policy of national union, formed itself in 1917, and began to win more and more sympathy.

In the last days of the war the sailors at Kiel mutinied against their officers, who wished to end the war with a glorious naval defeat. They found themselves in possession of the town. Mutinies in all the forces spread through the country. In Munich the U.S.P. leader, Kurt Eisner, suddenly found himself in power. In Berlin, still in the hands of the Kaiser, a radical shop-stewards' movement prepared a general strike. At the last moment, the social-democrats changed their attitude and slipped in to lead the movement. By November 10th, the revolutionary movement was in the control of the moderate socialist elements.

In a few months, the moderate social-democrats were in power. The Bavarian U.S.P. régime was swept away in a few days: it was not what the country wanted. The January elections gave the social-democrats five times as many votes as the left. Trade union membership increased fourfold. The social-democrats, now in a position of security, set about to draw up their programme.

The first thing they did was to grant many of the demands of the trade unions. The next thing they did was to demilitarize the factories and restore their administration to private enterprise. Nationalization

was discussed at great length, but very little came of it. The party devoted its energies towards creating a liberal-minded capitalist republic, maintaining the standard of living where that was possible, and extending democratic rights. But it took no effective steps at all towards introducing socialist measures. Instead, the social-democrats found themselves in the position of putting down riots and demonstrations, in which the U.S.P. and the Spartacists were taking part, with the help of the conservative elements who were their bitterest political enemies.

Their contention was that the country was not ripe for socialism, and that the votes they had received at the election were not socialist but trade union and progressive votes. There is very little doubt that this was largely true. While the German working and middle classes were anxious to obtain social reforms and democratic rights, most of them were quite unprepared for the temporary unsettlement a change-over to a socialist type of economy would involve. The utopian socialists in Germany had visualized socialism arriving in the shape of large-scale expropriations followed by a period of State management. Consequently, when they found themselves in power as the legal government of the country, they followed a more cautious policy than the revisionists would have done, for expropriation was out of the question, and to maintain the standard of living they had to help capitalism to recover its former prosperity. Yet there were things they could have done without alienating the "progressive"



vote, things which are often included in the programmes in advanced liberal or Fabian socialist parties. They could have broken the power of the Junker landlords by agrarian reforms and won the peasants for their cause. And, without expropriation, they could have subjected private enterprise to a national economic plan which would have benefited the people as a whole.

Their cautious programme naturally alienated the old governing classes, but nothing except a reversion to pre-war conditions would have satisfied them. More important still, it diverted the vague aspirations of the people towards trade union agitation for demands which could not possibly be met if capitalism was to be restored to its ancient prosperity. The strikers' demands were not met, and the government was forced to employ the conservative classes as strike-breakers. Naturally, this sort of policy was bound to drive some of the workmen to the left; it drove sections of the U.S.P. towards communism. At the same time, it gave the conservative classes such self-confidence that in March 1920 they attempted to capture power by means of an armed *coup d'état*.

The *coup d'état* of General Luttwitz and Dr. Kapp was met by a solid general strike, and risings against the military in several towns. While it was plain that most people did not want an advanced socialist régime, it was equally plain that they had no use whatever for a Junker government. And this was true of many sections of the middle classes as well as of the whole organized working class. The moderate

social-democrats lost a great deal of prestige. The Kapp-Luttwitz *putsch* had really been defeated by the trade unions, led by Karl Legien, and the militant opposition against it had been led in a great many cases by the U.S.P. Legien and his trade unionists were now ready for a more forward policy: agrarian reform, republicanization of the army and civil service, nationalization of mines. To this end they tried to mediate between the social-democrats and the U.S.P., and to induce them to form a joint government. The communists were also approached, and their delegate, Jacob Walcher, agreed that his party would assume the rôle of a loyal opposition. But at this point the negotiations broke down, and Germany was to be deprived of a chance in a lifetime.

The breakdown of Legien's negotiations, so tragically important for the future of Germany and of Europe, can only be understood against a background of socialist theory. Lenin's Third International had come into being, and his theory of a "labour aristocracy" and the "betrayal" of the working class by a bourgeois-minded socialist bureaucracy had become very popular in Germany. It was held not only by the German Communist Party but by a large number of U.S.P. members. Indeed, the theory seemed to fit the facts very well: the compromising policy of the social-democrats had certainly been responsible for the Kapp-Luttwitz *putsch*. The rank and file of the Communist Party and the U.S.P. were strongly opposed to a continuance of the parliamentary régime, and a

compromise with the social-democrats, they felt, involved a surrender of revolutionary aims. They considered that the only safe policy from the working-class point of view was a policy aiming at a proletarian dictatorship. The more conservative social-democrats, on the other hand, were unwilling to enter a government in which the U.S.P. would control important key positions. The German Communist Party upbraided Walcher,<sup>1</sup> and the rank and file U.S.P. members threatened to disown their leaders. There was nothing for it but for the social-democrats to resume power in collaboration with the middle-class liberals.

After 1920, the strength of the fundamentalist left increased in Germany. But it did not increase because it attracted non-political workmen, or because it attracted adherents from non-socialist parties. It increased by drawing disgruntled utopian elements away from the social-democrats. At the same time, revolutionary nationalist organizations—of which the Nazi movement was the most important—began to gain support. The Ruhr crisis precipitated this movement to the extreme left and right. The socialists in the coalition government were faced with the same difficulty as the British Labour Party in 1931. They had to decide whether to carry through themselves the economies dictated by a financial crisis over which they had no control and for which they were not primarily responsible,

<sup>1</sup> But Lenin, while disagreeing with Walcher's "formulation"—he had spoken of a democracy in which no class would dominate—approved of his action.



or whether, by refusing to co-operate with the liberal parties, to hand over the government to the right. The social-democrats decided to carry out the cuts themselves. The communists did their best to divert the dissatisfaction of the people with the liberal-socialist government into revolutionary channels: they even attempted to start a proletarian dictatorship in U.S.P. Saxony. But the leftward movement away from the government was more than compensated for by the growing power of the right.

“As for the social-democrats,” G. D. H. Cole says, “they could no longer claim to be the effective *canalizers* of the whole force of working-class discontent, or to be the real representatives of the working class as a whole. Accordingly their power and influence suffered, and gradually the bourgeois parties were able to push them out from their original position of predominance in the affairs of the new parliamentary States. Stage by stage the social-democrats found themselves pressed back all along the line . . . and they were reduced to the status of an opposition unable even to oppose with all its strength for fear of upsetting the precarious democratic constitutions which they had set up, and of provoking a powerful offensive alliance of all the bourgeois reactionary forces against the parliamentary régime.”

In Hungary, events took an even more dramatic course. The social structure of Hungary needs some explaining first of all. Ostensibly, it was a parliamentary democracy, but in fact the lower class vote

was restricted, and the management of elections was often corrupt. The political power was largely in the hands of an intelligent landowning aristocracy and gentry who played next to no part at all in the country's business or industry. Business and industry were in the hands of a middle class which did not share in the management of the country. Because of an aristocratic aversion to "trade," the urban part of Hungarian economic life was in the hands of the despised Jews—the only section of a predominantly agricultural community from which an urban middle class could be recruited. Cut off from any participation in Hungarian national culture, the Jewish middle class evolved a culture derived from Germany. As a community, it lived in a sort of imaginary exile: gifted though it was, it could play no part in Hungarian national life.

The urban working class was strongly organized in trade unions. In spite of the fact that its standard of life was low in comparison with that of other European countries, and in spite of the fact that a limited franchise prevented it from taking part in the affairs of the country, the organized working class remained loyal to the aristocratic régime throughout the war. Why? Partly because its situation was relatively so much better than that of the peasants, and partly because the isolated middle class did not, and could not, train it to political independence as an ally against the conservative landowners. The middle class as a whole remained isolated from the working class, and the working class remained isolated from the peasantry.

In 1918 the régime suffered a complete defeat. The national minorities broke away. Industry lost both raw materials and markets. Unemployment grew in all classes. In the first reaction, a liberal-socialist-democrat "National Council" was swept into power, representing the interests of the unemployed nationalist officers and civil servants, the liberal Jews, and the trade unions. The problem before the "National Council" was a vast one: it was nothing less than the creation of a democratic State.

The first step towards a liberal democracy in an agricultural country is the breaking-up of the big estates and the raising of the peasant standard of life. The only other alternative to liberal democracy in a country where feudalism has broken down is a form of "fundamentalist" socialism which emphasises the role of the peasant. The "National Council" did not carry out this first essential. Its efficiency was hampered on three sides—by the social-democrat trade unions, by the latently conservative civil service, and by the victorious Allies, whose overweening demands threw liberal democracy into disrepute.

The social-democrat trade unions made the same mistake as they had in Bulgaria. They refused to co-operate with the peasants—by far the most important *and* the most ill-used section of the community—because they regarded the division of the big estates as a reactionary measure. As the Allied demands became more exorbitant, the trade unions became more Bolshevist. But the proletarian



dictatorship they had in mind was a dictatorship of the workers without the peasants, and implied the rapid collectivization of agriculture.

There certainly was a revolutionary situation: but no trained revolutionary organization existed, and no trained leaders were available. Both had to be imported from Russia, in the shape of Russian-trained returned war prisoners and Bela Kun.

While Bela Kun set himself the task of revolutionizing the unemployed, the situation *vis-à-vis* the Allies went from bad to worse. When the armistice commission informed the Hungarian government that they must evacuate Debreczen, the second biggest town in the country, popular feeling repudiated the democratic régime. The "National Council," betrayed by the Western democracies, simply handed over the government to the social-democrats, who, though unwilling to endanger their pre-eminence by an alliance with the communists, were forced into a coalition with them. No other step was possible. The communists were strong, their agitators had the sympathy of many of the soldiers. It would have been impossible to govern against them. A Soviet republic, pledged to defend Hungarian territorial integrity, was declared.

The history of the short-lived Hungarian Soviet Republic was a mixture of heroism and blundering. Its first action was to refuse the mediation of General Smuts, and so lose an excellent opportunity of enlisting British support against the French. Inevitably the Rumanians invaded the country. In an extraordinary effort, only comparable to that of

the Madrid workers, the workers of Budapest rose against the invaders, under the leadership of the social-democrat trade union leader Boehm, and the gifted communist officer Aurel Stromfeld. For a time they were remarkably successful. But an economic breakdown behind the lines broke the military offensive.

It is hard not to be strongly prejudiced against Bela Kun. It is perhaps enough to say that his character was an unfortunate compound of weakness and violence. He had precipitated the Hungarian revolution by making impossible promises of higher wage rates to the trade unions. Now the trade unions demanded the fulfilment of his promises, and insisted on being paid in the old "blue" currency of the Empire. At the same time, the peasants, suspicious of Bela Kun's intentions, and angry at requisition of cereals for the army, started to riot. Instead of resisting the impossible demand of the unions to be paid in "blue" money, and showing leniency to the peasants, on whom the food supply depended, Bela Kun did exactly the opposite. Trade unionists were appeased, and peasants were shot. The dictatorship of the workers was a very skimpy one. Because the liberal middle class had had no administrative training, the administration was left in the hands of the old unpopular bureaucracy. At the same time, no attempt was made to form working-class political organs: the only soviet in the Soviet Republic was the central soviet of Budapest. In the country, because nobody could be found to run the nationalized estates, their owners

were left in charge as State managers. The lack of personnel was perhaps most felt in the police. Police operations were left in the hands of irresponsible men whose ruthlessness alienated the sympathies the government had won for its stand against the Allies.<sup>1</sup>

A defeat in diplomacy finished Bela Kun's chances. He was anxious to conciliate the trade unions who were pressing for peace, so he accepted Clemenceau's guarantee that the Rumanians would be withdrawn if the Hungarians would retreat from Slovakia. The Hungarians carried out their part of the pledge, against the advice of Boehm and Stromfeld, only to discover that they had been let down. The Rumanians stayed: the nationalist emotions which had kept the army loyal to Kun turned towards the old aristocratic parties. The army broke up, some of it going over to the "Whites," some of it just going home. There was nothing for it but to go. Kun went. For five days Boehm tried to keep things going. On the fifth a "white" *coup d'état*, accompanied by organized Jewish pogroms, finished what was left of the régime.

A short time before his downfall Kun had tried to put off the impending debacle by encouraging revolutionary aspirations in Austria. The situation in Austria was far from revolutionary. The Austrian peasantry, though republican by now, were strongly

<sup>1</sup> A word is perhaps necessary about the much-publicized atrocities of the Bela Kun régime. "Red" sources give the figure for executions as 234; "white" sources give it as 578. The white régime which followed had a considerably larger figure to its discredit.



Catholic and anti-Soviet. The Vienna workmen were well organized in trade unions under social-democratic control. The peasantry were well satisfied with their little homesteads: the workmen were pleased with their leaders, Otto Bauer and Friedrich Adler, for pressing for a speedy peace. Revolution was not attractive in a period of food shortage—much more serious in Austria than in Hungary. Only a small group of “fundamentalists”—socialists to the left of Adler’s left, and supporters, not of Adler’s pacifist attitude, but of Lenin’s slogan, “Turn the imperialist war into civil war”—were sympathetic to Kun’s appeal for revolutionary action. This group, which formed itself into the Communist Party of Austria, had won support among the munition workers during the last part of the war because of their daring campaign for immediate peace negotiations. Well, peace had come, and the munition workers were not convinced by the idea that it should be followed by the positively last war to end war. The only chance for the communists would come if the Allies made such unfair demands that popular feeling would turn against the liberal and social-democrat peace negotiations. The Allies very nearly obliged. The armistice commission ordered the cutting down of the Austrian “people’s army.” The reduction of the “people’s army” would have simply swelled the enormous army of underfed unemployed. What the various allied relief committees were doing with one hand, the allied armistice commissions were preparing to undo with the other. Naturally, popular indignation grew,

and the communists won a little more influence. With extraordinary optimism, and mainly at the prompting of Kun's liaison officer, a certain Dr. Bettelheim, the Austrian communists prepared a *putsch*. The Allied demand was withdrawn at the last moment, but the *putsch* went on. It was launched just at the moment when popular anger was dying down. Ten thousand people at most took part in an attempt to storm a prison. Twenty were killed, and the demonstration was broken up. Dr. Bettelheim spent a few weeks in prison and was then released. The *putsch* had been launched against the advice of many of the Austrian communist leaders, and did, in fact, more to kill the chances of a communist movement in Austria than any government ban. In the following years, the social-democratic movement went in the same way as in Germany. Successful social-democracy in Austria was impossible without successful social-democracy in Germany. But Austrian social-democracy did at least meet the onset of fascism with armed resistance. In February 1934 the "clerical fascist" government of Dollfuss was threatening the legal existence of the Socialist Party. The socialist leaders, under Otto Bauer, did their best to make a compromise with Dollfuss. But it became quite clear that Dollfuss was not interested: he wanted nothing less than the suppression of any independent working-class movement. The socialists had to decide whether to submit or fight. It was clear that resistance could only have a hundred to one chance of success in almost bankrupt Austria. Still, the

“Schutzbund,” the military organization of the Austrian social-democrats, only a few hundred of whom had arms, rose in Vienna and resisted the military forces for four days. There were some strikes in the rest of the country and general sympathy was felt for the Schutzbund among the working classes. But only a solid general strike could have helped the Viennese workmen, and that was impossible to achieve in the face of the enormous unemployment that existed in Austria. The Socialist Party was of course suppressed, but its struggle gave it prestige, and it continued to exist underground and retain the silent sympathies of the Viennese workmen.



## CHAPTER VII

# THE DEVELOPMENT OF FRENCH SOCIALISM 1871-1931

THE resolute suppression of the Paris Commune, and the political persecution which followed it completely nullified French socialism, and indeed the political activity of the working class, for several years. Straightforward political activity was impossible, but trade union activity was urgently called for. Curiously enough, the man chiefly responsible for putting the French trade union movement on its feet was no socialist, but a republican journalist called Barberet. Barberet wished to encourage a syndical movement which would eventually develop into producers' co-operation, not in order to supersede capitalist production but to "equalize wealth." Meanwhile the syndical movement should concern itself with problems of apprenticeship and technical education, and take an equal part along with employers in industrial arbitration. Barberet's idea caught on, and by 1875 there were 135 syndicates in Paris. In 1876 the syndicates arranged a labour congress which was attended by their own delegates and representatives of co-operative and mutual aid

societies. Its tone was all that Barberet could have desired, and its only original demand was working-class representation in Parliament. But a later congress at Marseilles in 1879 called itself the "Socialist Labour Congress," expressed itself in favour of the collective control of the means of production and adopted a resolution to organize a working-class political party. This change in the atmosphere reflected internal French politics. By 1879 the Republic was securely re-established and independent working-class political action could now be taken without helping the reactionaries.

A group of socialists influenced by the First International had existed in Paris since 1873. In 1877 it found a political leader in Jules Guesde and a propaganda medium in his paper *L'Egalité*. The "Socialist Labour Congress" came under the influence of Guesde's "collectivists," as they called themselves, and soon parted company with the pure "co-operators," who were unwilling to embark on political action. The process of fission went on almost indefinitely, for the First International-inspired collectivists, temporarily held together by their opposition to the co-operators, soon disintegrated into Marxists and Bakuninists, under the influence of Guesde and Reclus respectively. In 1882, the Marxist group split again into an orthodox and an opportunist party—the Parti Ouvrier Français under Guesde, and the Parti Ouvrier Socialiste under Paul Brousse. Guesde's party claimed to represent scientific Marxian socialism: it affirmed its revolutionary character by denying the possibility of

reforming capitalist society. At the same time it competed for representation in the Chamber and the municipal councils, but not in order to pass reforms, but in order "to talk to the masses out of the windows." The Broussist or "possibilist" party, as it was nicknamed, allowed a great deal more theoretical latitude and local initiative in its organization than did the Guesdist party. Like the Fabian Society, it conceived the seizure of power as a gradual infiltration into parliament, municipality, and civil service, but unlike the Fabian Society, it was in close touch with the working class. It concentrated all its energies upon gaining an entrance into parliament and the municipalities, and to this end produced short-term programmes of a gradualist character. The Broussists themselves were not proof against schism, for in 1887 a militant younger group known as the Allemanists detached itself on the grounds that the parent party was neglecting propaganda for gas-and-water politics. To the left of the Guesdist party stood a small group of insurrectionary communists linked together by a loyalty to Blanqui's memory. To its right stood the "Independents," a group of sympathetic intellectuals organized for the purpose of working out legislative projects of a progressive character, which were published in their famous monthly—*Le Revue Socialiste*. This group had an influence far beyond its own membership—and produced some of the greatest French politicians, Jaurès, Millerand, and Viviani amongst them.

During these party dissensions, the syndicates struggled back to something like their old position.



Naturally enough, the rival socialist factions competed against each other for their control. Local syndicates found themselves split by Guesdist-Allemanist or Allemanist-Anarchist controversies. The non-socialist and even the vaguely socialist workmen were repelled by the invasion of doctrinaire politics and left their unions. Strikes were constantly being nullified by inter-party squabbles. Meanwhile the need for a united trade union movement was becoming more and more pressing as the industrial development of France progressed.

Fortunately for the development of socialism in France, the government introduced a tactlessly reactionary trade union law in 1884. In 1886 organized working men of various political opinions met in congress at Lyons and decided in principle that a National Federation of Syndicates—a sort of T.U.C.—was necessary to help individual syndicates in their struggles with employers. A national federation was formed. It was captured very soon by the Guesdists, and never succeeded in establishing more than a few connections between the local syndicates and the central organization. Still, the idea survived and was to become important.

Meanwhile a Federation of Labour Exchanges (*Bourses du Travail*) was coming into existence, sponsored by the active Allemanists. Labour exchanges were not a new idea: they had been advocated by many revolutionary parties. At first it was proposed that labour exchanges should act simply as job finders for the unemployed. But now, with the growth of socialist influence in the

municipalities—which were to erect the necessary buildings—their scope was enlarged. They became working-men's clubs, with libraries and lecture rooms attached. Political bitterness could not survive in a friendly “club” atmosphere, consequently the Federation of Labour Exchanges became the centre of a campaign for working-class unity.

In the late 'eighties, another factor emerged which was to call forth further political groupings. This was the idea of the general strike. Again, this was not a new idea. It had received wide publicity in England in the 'thirties, during the palmy days of the O.B.U. It had been constantly upheld by the federalist and Bakuninist delegates at congresses of the International. Now it reappeared in France, and its first propagandist seems to have been the anarchist carpenter Tortelier.

The idea of the general strike was well received by the syndicates. It was felt that the failures of partial strikes would be remedied by a general strike, especially as the employers had not been slow to grasp the effectiveness of combined action. At the same time it recommended itself as a way of bringing about the social revolution. “The conquest of political power” advocated by the Guesdists seemed remote and uncertain. The insurrection advocated by the Blanquists and anarchists seemed impossible in view of the increased efficiency of armaments, and the new construction of cities, which made street fighting out of date. These considerations made it find favour among several political groups. The Allemanists took it up. The Blanquists admitted its

uses. And it found eloquent supporters at the Congresses of Syndicates in Fernand Pelloutier<sup>1</sup> and the young Aristide Briand.

The kind of general strike envisaged was a "peaceful strike of folded arms" (*grève des bras croisés*), which would be legal, as striking was a right guaranteed by law. It would amount to a revolution because a complete cessation of work would starve out the ruling classes, who would be forced to capitulate. At first it was thought that it should be organized, but the idea of a spontaneous general strike, only hastened by organization and propaganda, was adopted later as having greater moral force.

The only party to remain entirely unconvinced by this attractive Jacob's ladder was the Guesdist party, who refused to take it seriously. The working men, they argued, would have died of starvation before their rulers would have felt the first pangs of hunger. And it would be inconceivable that the ruling classes would be impressed by the peaceful "legality" of the general strike if it aimed at their downfall. They would soon provoke some sort of "illegality." At any rate, if a state of revolutionary fervour which made a general strike possible were

<sup>1</sup> Fernand Pelloutier, a young "bourgeois" of a Catholic family, started life as an advanced republican. Soon he was influenced by Guesde and joined his party. The general strike controversy alienated him from Guesde, and in 1893 he came under the influence of the anarchists. He was appointed Secretary of the Federation of Labour Exchanges and was very successful in preventing them from being disorganized by political dissensions. He had a genius for organization, and under his secretaryship the efficient functioning of his employment bureaux and his technical classes drew many as yet untouched working-class elements into syndical activity. His *Histoire des Bourses du Travail* is one of the best social histories of the time.



reached, a general strike would be redundant. But above all, to attack capitalism in the economic field is futile, because the capitalists are stronger. Only in the political field are the workers equal, while democracy lasts, because of their greater number. The strike is a useful secondary weapon and an educative experience. But it is only when it is used in conjunction with a political movement that it can become the prelude to revolution.

Their inflexible attitude lost the Guesdists their control of the National Federation of Syndicates. Again the government obligingly consolidated the labour movement by closing the Paris Labour Exchange for not having conformed to the law of 1884. The Federation of Labour Exchanges invited the National Federation of Syndicates to a joint congress to discuss the unification of both organizations. The syndicates went in spite of the protests of their Guesdist leaders. At Limoges in 1895 the foundations of a new national organization, the *Confédération Générale du Travail*, were laid. The Limoges Congress was a complete victory for the partisans of the general strike, and the first article of its new creation was:

“The elements constituting the C. G. T. will remain independent of all political schools.”

General strike, independence of party politics, superiority of economic over political action, these were the ideas, foreshadowing the later and more articulate developments in revolutionary syndicalism, which the Allemanists had, paradoxically, fostered. The Blanquists too contributed to the new ideas, for

they had always held that political and economic organizations should be independent of each other. And many anarchists, glad to get rid of the "proletarian dictatorship," encouraged their propagation.

French socialism was now roughly divided into two wings—the syndical and the political, the first more or less federalist and libertarian in attitude, the second social-democratic. The C.G.T. was the militant organ on the syndical side, and could afford to be, for as a rule those benevolent activities which usually hamper trade union militancy were undertaken by the Federation of Labour Exchanges.

It would be impossible, and even boring, to describe the relations between the parliamentary, social-democratic parties. It will be sufficient to say that they reflect the high standard in France of political discussion, and the sensitiveness of French socialists to what English socialists would regard as purely academic issues. They had their first big electoral success in 1893 when they had over fifty deputies elected. The demands of constituencies began to prove too much for Guesdist orthodoxy, and in 1894 a new programme was framed including suggested reforms which would benefit peasant farmers, small merchants, and the lower middle classes generally. It was now possible to approach the reformist groups with a view to extending in the country the alliance already existing between the socialist parties in the Chamber. But this unity did not last for long.

Millerand, leader of the independent socialists, entered the liberal cabinet of M. Waldeck Rousseau. The Guesdists and Blanquists denounced this action

as a violation of the principles of the class struggle. The reformist groups, on the other hand, insisted upon the necessity of taking part in the life of the country and assuming necessary responsibilities. The workmen of the C.G.T. were shocked at Millerand's open avowal of the idea of class collaboration, and Millerand's argument that the Republic needed their support because it was being menaced from the right by the "anti-Dreyfusard" parties only increased their hostility. The "affaire Millerand" disgusted the syndicates and increased their anti-political tendencies. At the same time the socialists of the left began to regard the syndicates as the last refuge of the revolutionary spirit and joined in their activities. The bloody repression of some strikes and the success of others, more or less "general" in character, increased the rebelliousness and the self-confidence of the C.G.T. The combination of all these factors—the "affaire Millerand," the strikes, and the unsolicited testimonials from the left-wing socialists—gave the C.G.T. workmen, especially the anarchist, anti-political ones, great prestige, and their spokesmen began to give shape to their ideas. At the Montpellier Congress of 1902, when the administrative consequences of fusion of the Federation of Labour Exchanges and the C.G.T. were worked out, the "new" tendencies of French syndicalism received a perfectly clear exposé.

Let us examine them:

The class struggle cannot be either ignored or deplored. On the contrary, it should be hailed as a



force which is working for emancipation, which develops the will-power of the oppressed, and which creates new ideas of right (*droit*).

The organization of workmen in syndicates canalizes their vague feelings of discontent. It is a fundamental type of organization, and very much stronger than the political group, because it is based not on community of ideas but on community of interests.

In view of the organization of class interests opposed to them they should prefer industrial unionism to craft unionism. They should never avail themselves of arbitration, but obtain concessions from employers by "direct action"—by strike, boycott, the label, and sabotage. Sabotage, however, must be directed against the employer and not against the public. The State, whether reactionary or democratic, is the political organization of the capitalist class. It must be treated like the employers, and concessions must be gained by "direct action"—demonstrations, agitations, etc. Syndicates, as such, must boycott elections. Political beliefs must be regarded as a private question for members.

The idea of patriotism is a bourgeois idea. The worker has no country.

Anti-militarism is a syndicalist attitude, for two reasons. Firstly, wars divide the working class, who have to bear the brunt of them in any case. The working-class must not allow itself to be instrumental in bringing misery upon another working class in the course of a quarrel between the rulers of two countries. Secondly, military discipline destroys

working-class initiative and independence. Working-class soldiers are commonly used against working-class strikers. But that is no reason to hate the soldiers. On the contrary, the syndicalist must strive to establish friendly relations with the soldiery and convince them that their interests are the same.

The general strike will abolish classes and establish new forms of society. It is the logical outcome of the syndicalist movement. There will be failures in strikes and false starts, but they do not prove that failures will go on for ever. To-day's failures are useful experiences which will serve to-morrow's success.

These ideas were the content of the immediate propaganda of the French syndicalist movement. But discussions concerning the nature of society after the general strike took place. These discussions did not play such a large part in propaganda as immediate strategy, as it was generally held that the future forms of society would come about of themselves, as they had done in the past. But there was general agreement on one point: that the social institutions created within capitalism by the working class—the trade union, local and national trade federations and labour exchanges—would form the basis of the new society, and that within this new society—often labelled “economic federalism”—all property would be collective.

The reader will have realized, from this short résumé of syndicalist ideas, that the movement owed its special character to the ideas of Bakunin rather than to those of Marx. Its most influential

propagandists, Pelloutier, Pouget, and Yvetot, were all communist-anarchists. There has been, however, a curious misapprehension about French syndicalism in other countries, which probably arose out of an original mistake on the part of Werner Sombart, an eminent German interpreter of socialism. Sombart ascribed the articulation of French syndicalist thought to Georges Sorel, one of the group of writers connected with the monthly *Mouvement Socialiste* and the weekly *Guerre Sociale*. Sorel<sup>1</sup> was a gifted and original journalist who wrote about

<sup>1</sup> Sorel's individual contribution to political thought was the idea of the "social myth." He regarded socialism as, essentially, a moral education which would fit an oppressed class for the direction of a new form of society. This new form of society would be an entirely new culture, which would have nothing in common with democracy, which is based on a "fiction," the fiction of the general will, and which delivers the effective management of affairs into the hands of a professional class of politicians. The machinery of democracy is the machinery of demoralization, because it takes away from the people the management of their own affairs. The greatest educative force of the syndicalist movement is the idea of the general strike. This idea is a "social myth," a reassuring image of the future which heartens a social movement in times of adversity, and which is essential to its continuance. It is particularly valuable because its moral violence makes "the attempts to realize social peace seem childish." The bourgeoisie, when it realizes this, will give up its political fictions, and concentrate on economic organization. It will be all to the good when the debris of democracy is cleared away: then the two classes will face each other in a straightforward economic struggle. Moral violence, the capacity for enthusiastic action, makes men "free" in the Bergsonian sense, that is, in possession of themselves.

Sorel, while calling himself a "neo-Marxist," was considerably under the influence of Bergson and Nietzsche, with whom Marx can hardly be said to have many spiritual affinities. There can be nothing less akin to Marx's scientific temperament than Sorel's insistence on the mysterious nature of social phenomena. It is rather interesting to remember that Sorel ended up as a "neo-monarchist," that is to say a supporter of a movement which has now joined forces with the French varieties of fascism. His best known books are: *Réflexions sur la Violence*, and *Illusions du Progrès*.



French syndicalism from the outside, giving its propaganda a speculative twist and a philosophical subtlety which was entirely his own. To be sure, he was read with interest by French workmen, and certainly influenced the young intellectuals of the Italian anarcho-syndicalist movement, Mussolini among them. But he was never a great influence in France.

Side by side with the syndicalist movement, the political movement grew, still troubled by internal dissensions, but growing more and more reformist. By 1905 it had achieved a formal unity under the leadership of Jean Jaurès. The reformist trend in French political socialism was not entirely due to the "corruption" of democratic activity. The peasantry, the most important single class in France, were hostile to any movement which questioned, or seemed to question, their property rights. The original Guesdist formula, which advocated a neutral attitude towards a form of property which was bound to disappear as the internal crises of capitalism became more acute, was gradually replaced by more friendly and palliative programmes, for it had become clear that an effective socialist majority in the Chamber was impossible without provincial support. Just before the Great War, in 1914, there were 102 socialist deputies out of a total of 577, some independents, and a huge *bloc* of radical-socialists. The French Radical Party was the great party of the French middle and lower middle classes, the party of "social peace." Its left wing, like the left wing of the pre-war Liberal Party in England,

was sympathetic towards some of the socialists' projects for social reform. The socialists, although at this period they still retained their objection to taking part in coalitions with non-socialist parties, were able to increase their parliamentary influence by lending their support to progressive radical measures.

The "reformism" of the French Socialist Party was supposed by orthodox Marxist commentators to have been instrumental in bringing about the Great War. If the leaders of the French working class, the argument runs, had initiated a really positive anti-war movement and had opposed war preparations in the Chamber, then the vacillating German and Austrian movements would have followed suit. Reformist and patriotic the French political socialist movement certainly was, but it was rather less to blame than the other great continental movements. In July 1914 a meeting of the International Bureau of the Second International was called to discuss the ominous international situation. All but one of the delegates decided to organize popular pressure against war in their respective countries. Only Victor Adler, the Austrian delegate, frankly and cynically admitted the inability of the Austrian socialist movement to repress the prevalent chauvinism of his country. The old socialist slogan of the general strike against war had been dismissed as far back as 1907 by the Second International as utopian, and the delegates were left free to do what they thought fit. The executive of the German Social-Democratic Party had promised the French Socialist Party not to vote for war credits, and

repeated this declaration on August 1st, 1914. At the same time, Jouhaux, leader of the C.G.T., had proposed to Legien, leader of the German trade union movement, that they should prepare for parallel action in the event of war. Legien did not respond. The date of the next full congress of the International was put forward to August 9th, and it was to be held in Paris. The day after the French socialists had welcomed the assurances of the German executive, the German troops crossed the French frontier, on the 3rd Germany declared war on France, and on the 4th the German social-democrats voted for war credits. The quick *volte-face* of the German party was due, as we have explained in another chapter, to inherent weakness in its policy, to pressure from the rank and file, and to fears of the bad intentions of the German Government regarding it. It preferred to preserve itself as a national party of social reform and to retain the votes of the patriotic workmen, rather than undergo a period of unpopularity and persecution. In its main calculation, that it would emerge at the end of the war as the strongest party in the State, it was right. But it could not have calculated, just because it had not taken a sufficiently cynical view of the causes of the war, that a Wilsonian peace was impossible while the Allied countries were governed by representatives of the interests of capitalism and imperialism. The Treaty of Versailles turned the Social-Democratic Party, in the estimation of hundreds of thousands of Germans, from the party of peace into the party of national humiliation.



The course of events in France, as in Belgium, followed the same rough pattern. First, a period of "social patriotism," easily justified by the treaty-breaking aggression of autocratic Germany, and by the apparently defensive nature of the war. Then, a pacifist breakaway from the socialist movement, but within the framework of the Second International. And, last of all, after the end of 1917, a movement against intervention in Russia, at first merely sympathetic to and elated by the Russian revolution, but eventually consciously revolutionary and consciously opposed to reformism both in the political and syndical movement.

The period immediately after the war was dominated by the coalition known as the Bloc National, which, like nearly all political groupings bearing the label "national," was reactionary. The socialist movement was disunited and weak. The reactionary nature of the government strengthened the left, pro-Bolshevik wing which, in 1921, broke off to join the French Communist Party. A split occurred in the C.G.T., a communist, anti-syndicalist wing affiliated to the Red Trade Union International breaking off to form the C.G.T.U. The C.G.T. was in a bad way, for it had not only the communist unions to contend with, it also suffered government repression.

During the next few years, socialism in France gradually recovered. The French Radical left-centre, temporarily dispossessed by the "national" parties, began to recover its influence, and with the reassertion of the French liberal tradition, working-

class political circles were restored to self-confidence. In the Chamber, the socialists acted more or less in concert with the radicals. In the elections of 1928, the main socialist party secured 100 seats, the communists 12, and the republican socialists (the old "independents") 31.

At the Socialist Party's Congress just after the elections the main programme of gradual socialization was reaffirmed, and the party decided to steer clear of coalitions. But the question, the same old issue of "Millerandism," came up again at the next congress after the socialists' refusal to enter a cabinet under M. Daladier. Since this refusal had led to the formation of the disastrous Tardieu ministry, the "Millerandists" had a fairly good case. The "anti-Millerandists" however, held that participation in a minority radical government, more or less helpless in the Chamber, would have simply involved the Socialist Party in a messy defeat.

It was only when the international situation had changed very much for the worse that the socialists, urged on by the "new model" Communist Party, relaxed their opposition to modern "Millerandism."

#### THE GENERAL ELECTION RESULTS IN 1928

Unified Socialists	..	..	..	100	} Left
Communists	..	..	..	12	
Republican Socialists	..	..	..	31	
Radicals and Radical Socialists	..	..	..	125	} Left centre
Unionist and Social Left	..	..	..	18	
Radical Left	..	..	..	53	} Centre
Republican Left	..	..	..	64	

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Democratic and Social Action	..	29	} Right
Republican Democratic Union	..	102	
Popular Democrats	.. ..	19	
Independents	.. ..	53	
		<hr/>	
		606	
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## C.G.T.

(Control of public utilities—Dissemination of general information. International relations)

Trade Federations

(Technical supervision of various branches of production. Dissemination of technical information)

Individual Syndicates  
(Self-governing units of production)

Labour Exchanges  
(Local and national centres of economic activity, co-ordinating the individual syndicates, providing the mechanism of exchange and distribution between societies and localities, and collecting all statistical data necessary for the regular flow of economic life.)

## THE ORGANIZATION OF ECONOMIC FEDERALISM

## CHAPTER VIII

### THE RUSSIAN SOVIET STATE

**I**N March 1917 a strike broke out in Petrograd. Two hundred and forty thousand workmen paraded the streets. The Cossacks, who had been called out to drive them back, joined them. The Tsarist government had by now lost all authority: even the Grand Dukes condemned it. It fell, and was replaced by a government of the liberal middle classes, pledged to a policy of parliamentary democracy and gradualist reforms within a westernized capitalist system. The government, representing as it did a comparatively small and weak section of Russian society, rested in the last resort on the support of the Soviets. For, as in 1905, Soviets had sprung up, again largely under Menshevik influence.

Lenin had all this time been in exile, engaged in journalism and propaganda. His ideas at this time are clearly put forward in his letters to the newspaper *Pravda* and to his friend Alexandra Kollontai. "The first stage of the first revolution bred by the war will be neither final nor confined to Russia." . . . Although the revolution was carried out by the workers and revolutionary soldiers, state-power was seized by the bourgeoisie. For the provisional

government, be it led by Prince Lvov or the "progressive" Kerensky, was essentially a government of the bourgeoisie and in no position to grant the three things demanded by the people—peace, bread, and freedom. It was pledged to carry on the war in order to take part in the share-out promised by the Allied powers. Its object was not the creation of a people's republic but an imperialist state on the English model. Therefore, said Lenin, Russian socialists should not support it, but prepare to take power not through the Duma but through the Soviets. They should concentrate on the creation of an organization capable of leading on the workers and peasants to the next revolutionary stage, and wash their hands of the Menshevik compromisers. They should expose the true aims and limitations of the provisional government.

Lenin got back to Russia with the help of the German Government, who regarded him as a distinct asset to their war aims. At first he was unable to impress his colleagues about the practicability of his views. The Provisional government did its best to convince the socialist workmen that he was a German spy. Lenin, meanwhile, waited on in the certainty that public opinion would turn against the provisional government and towards the Bolsheviks.

He had realized that the economic and military situation had gone too far for successful patching up. A reactionary rising under General Kornilov played into his hands, driving the more intelligent workmen into the Bolshevik camp. At the end of October



Lenin made up his mind that the time was ripe. On the eve of the meeting of the Congress of Soviets from all parts of Russia, Bolshevik detachments, reinforced by mutinous soldiers and sailors, occupied the key points of Petrograd. It fell into their hands with scarcely any resistance. Moscow fell a few days later and then the insurrection spread to the provinces. Lenin had published a decree declaring that all land was public property, and the peasants carried through an agrarian revolution on their own.

There were two main problems before the Bolsheviks: the termination of the war, and the prevention of famine. It was obvious that any surrender to Germany would be unconditional. Lenin, in opposition to some of his colleagues, was ready to face this fact. For him, peace was more important than national humiliation, and he gauged popular feeling rightly in thinking so. Trotsky, who had thrown in his lot with Lenin, was sent to negotiate a peace with Germany at Brest-Litovsk. It was impossible to obtain any concessions whatsoever, so Trotsky used the opportunity to make propaganda to the press of the world. Russia lost Armenia, Ukraine, and all the Baltic States—that is, about a quarter of her population, her best agricultural lands, a third of her factories, and more than half her iron works and coal mines. Beside this monstrous treaty Versailles pales into humanitarian insignificance. Perhaps Lenin anticipated the defeat of Germany, which restored to Russia Ukraine and Russian Armenia. The food shortage was met to some degree by the imposition of a system of confiscation

and rationing similar to that in operation in other belligerent countries, but in spite of Lenin's attempts the situation became worse, for the peace with Germany had led to war with the Allied powers, anxious to secure their investments. In 1918 there was a German army in the Ukraine, engaged in setting up a puppet state, Rumanian and Polish armies on the western front, British troops in the north, French troops in the south, a Czech army in the Urals, and a Japanese force in the far east. The Allied forces co-operated with the White forces and supplied them with arms and equipment. The situation looked absolutely hopeless. But Lenin had been right in estimating that an Allied offensive was less to be feared than a German one. For the Allied forces were suspicious of each other, and the venture was unpopular at home. One by one they deserted the Whites, and by the autumn of 1919 the only foreign force left was the Japanese one which was more concerned with capturing Vladivostok than with defeating the Bolsheviks.

The Bolsheviks were left face to face with the re-equipped Whites. Trotsky had now been made commander-in-chief of the Red Armies. Although he was not a soldier, he was a superb organizer, and the only two weapons the Bolsheviks had against the Whites were superior organization and popular support. Trotsky made full use of them. He employed many ex-Tsarist officers who had joined the Red Armies out of disgust with foreign intervention, earning thereby the suspicion of Stalin, who now makes his first important appearance as the successful

defender of Petrograd. The White Generals meanwhile were divided, both on military and political policy. Some of them did not even scruple to use Anti-Semitic propaganda in order to gain popular support. Their methods were not nice: neither were those of the Bolsheviks. By the spring of 1920 they had collapsed, leaving the Bolsheviks only the Poles to contend with. After a ding-dong campaign, with the Poles winning the last offensive, peace was signed in October 1920.

The strain of the civil war had been terrific, its ravages enormous. In order to consolidate their military position the Bolsheviks had recourse to a rigid dictatorial system of militarized labour, requisitions, etc. An inevitable reaction took place. The hungry peasants, and in some places groups of soldiers and sailors, rose against the Soviet government, led here by Mensheviks and social revolutionaries and there by anarchists. The outbreak was easily suppressed, but the famine continued. Lenin had no alternative but to re-establish temporarily a form of controlled capitalism which would benefit peasants and small traders—the New Economic Policy or N.E.P.

The function of N.E.P. was to give Soviet Russia a breathing space while she restored her foreign trade and repaired her resources. While small industry was allowed to continue in the old way, large industries were formed into unified public trusts under the supervision of a Supreme Economic Council set up by the Congress of Soviets. Banking was put under government control, and co-operative societies took



charge of a large part of distribution. N.E.P. was capitalism, but capitalism preparing for a change-over to State capitalism as the next stage in the movement towards communism.

In 1923, just before Lenin's death, a new constitution was proclaimed and was worked out in full soon after his death. The new constitution recently proclaimed by Stalin is in fact an amplification of the old one, but adds to it provisions for a general election of a plebiscitory nature every five years. The delegates elected under the new system are not members of parliament in the British sense. The delegates are outside the Soviet system, being directly elected in the same manner as in democratic countries. The Soviet "parliament" or Supreme Council is a representative assembly which passes on popular opinion to the Government without powers to replace it. The main political structure in its early period of the new Russia—the Union of Socialist Soviet Republics—a confederation of the seven republics: the Russian Socialist Federated Soviet Republic, the White Russian S.S.R., the Ukrainian S.S.R., the Trans-Caucasian S.F.S.R., the Uzbek S.S.R., the Turkoman S.S.R., and the Tadzhik S.S.R., was the "democratic centralism" of the Soviet system. Since December 1936 three national regions have been taken out of the Trans-Caucasian S.F.S.R.—Armenia, Georgia, Azerbaijan—and two from the R.S.F.S.R.—the Kirghiz and Kazak regions, and promoted to the status of republics.

Marxist theory lays down that the transitional "dictatorship of the proletariat" must be based

upon social institutions created by the wage-earning classes themselves. As we have seen, the institutions created by the Russian working classes were the soviets, or councils, of workmen and peasants in factories and villages.

The constitution of 1923 provides for a sort of hierarchical government based ultimately on the small local soviets, but provides soviet representation for workers outside factories in additional local soviets. It will be easiest to describe the system by example:

The peasants, say, of Kalininopol, meet together and elect (nowadays by secret ballot) their own delegates. The delegates form part of a district soviet, which elects delegates to a regional soviet, which in turn elects delegates to the soviet of a republic. The apex of the pyramid is, or was, the All-Union Congress of Soviets (A.U.C.S.), which meets once a year, and with the help of a Council of Nationalities, elected similarly from national groups within the U.S.S.R., elects a Central Executive Committee (the T.S.I.K.) which in turn nominates a Praesidium which controls the Soviet Cabinet, or Council of Commissars (Sovnarkom). The A.U.C.S. was in theory the supreme legislative body, and, until recently when the proportion was altered to benefit the peasants, included one member for every 25,000 town voters and one for every 125,000 rural inhabitants. The Supreme Economic Council, which controls the industrial life of the country, consists of representatives of the government, trade unions, and co-operative societies, its president is an *ex officio*

member of T.S.I.K., and its measures must be submitted for ratification to the Sovnarkom. The Supreme Economic Council is guided in its instructions to industry by material furnished by the State Planning Commission (Gosplan), which is responsible to the Sovnarkom. T.S.I.K. appoints numerous standing committees to deal with various problems. The Sovnarkom is served by Ministries (narkomats), various other boards whose heads may sit with the Sovnarkom, and departments without cabinet representation but responsible to the Sovnarkom. The All-Union administrative structure is paralleled in the federated republics. Decrees, which have the force of law, are issued by the Sovnarkom and bear the signature of the presidents of T.S.I.K. and the Sovnarkom, and often that of the secretary of the Communist Party.

Since December 1936 A.U.C.S. has been replaced by a directly elected council sitting together with the Council of Nationalities and forming together the Supreme Council and meeting more often. The functions of T.S.I.K. have been allocated to a Praesidium elected from the Supreme Council. But the Stalin reform of the constitution has not really meant any great change in the method of government. A.U.C.S.'s importance really consisted of the fact that its congresses were used as opportunities for making public projected changes of policy. Towards the end of its life it hardly met at all and other platforms were used. The replacement of A.U.C.S. by the directly elected Supreme Council, and the limitation of the soviet form to the lower organs of

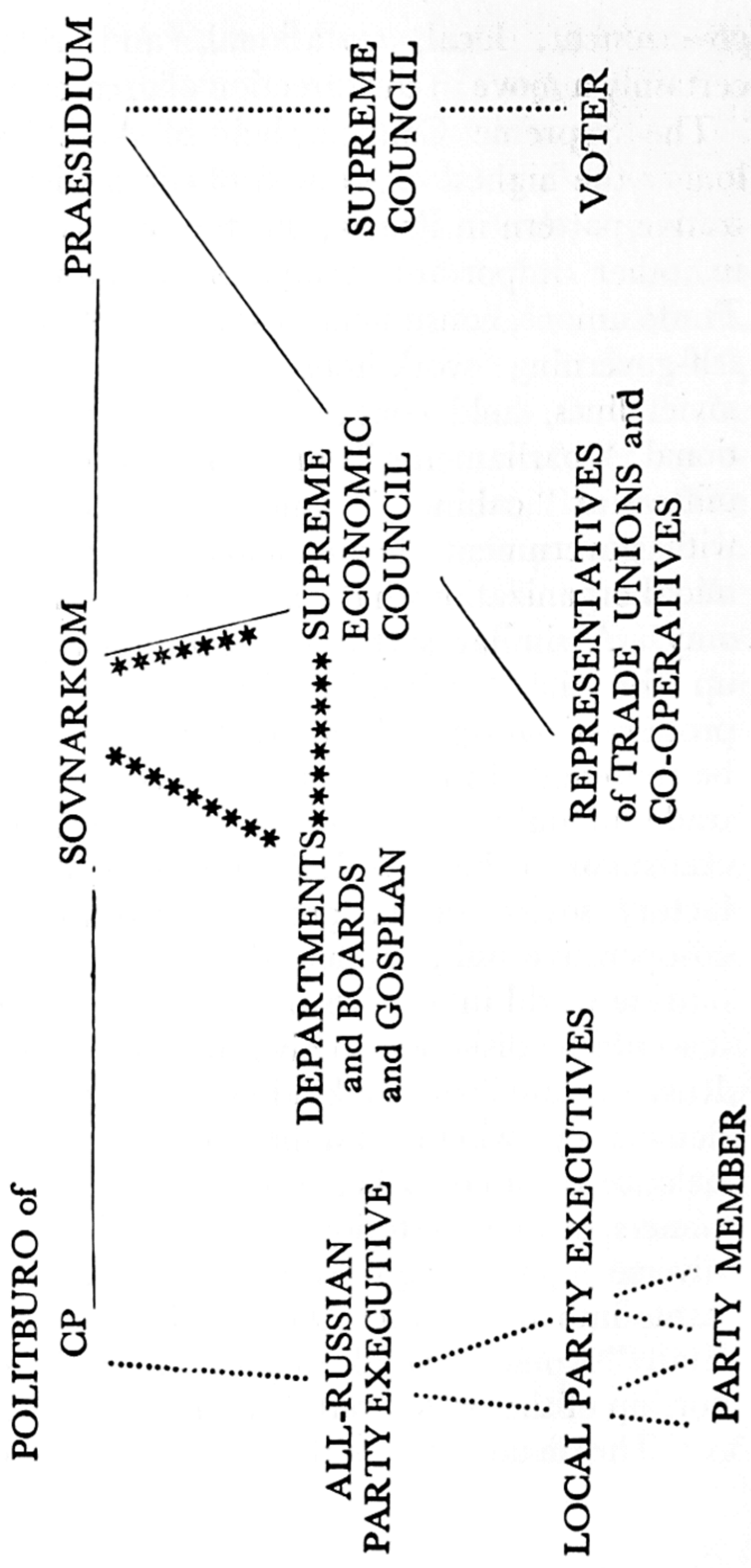


government, local, vocational, and regional, is certainly a move in the direction of greater efficiency.

The Supreme Council, heir of A.U.C.S., is no longer the highest expression of the Soviet administrative pattern in Russia, but the pattern is retained in other important branches of administration. Trade unions, consumers' co-operative societies, and self-governing workshops are all organized on soviet lines, hold congresses which resemble vocational "parliaments" and elect executive committees or "cabinets" which are in constant touch with government departments. These vast pyramidal organizations have a large measure of autonomy. A similar sort of organization is being built up for the "collective farms" or agricultural producers' co-operatives. In fact, the Russian can be represented in a variety of ways: as a citizen, a trade unionist, a consumer, and an independent craftsman. If he attends the meetings of his local or factory soviet, of his group of workshops, of his co-operative unit, assiduously, he can influence the outside world in all sorts of different directions. But it would be dishonest to give the impression that the Russian state form is a kind of multiform centralized democracy owing its stability to a kind of miraculous balance of interests between trade unions and consumers, or to a mysterious agreement between all the diverse organs of government. If such a situation came into being, then the "withering away of the State" would have already begun, and the "dictatorship of the proletariat" would have passed away.

"The dictatorship of the proletariat" is, of course,

- ..... = lines of election
- = *Ex officio* and conventional overlapping of personnel
- \*\*\*\*\* = administrative connections



not the dictatorship of the working class as such. It is the dictatorship of the most energetic members of that class.<sup>1</sup> And the "dictatorship" is two-fold: a democratic "dictatorship" where the "dictators" are freely elected in trade unions, factories, or villages, and an aristocratic "dictatorship" in which the "dictators" are co-opted, and not elected, into the Communist Party. The Communist Party has been compared in an analogical manner to the Society of Jesus, and to the body of prefects in an English public school. It is certainly not a party in the accepted European sense: it is more like an Order. For while it is self-appointed like any other political party, and while membership of it is now open to everybody, its members have duties and responsibilities as strict as those of any religious order. The dictatorship of the more energetic members of the proletariat does resolve itself, in fact, to the dictatorship of the Communist Party. For the Communist Party—and its function is plainly stated in the new constitution—is expected to provide guidance in matters of general policy. The non-party trade union secretary's or committee executive's initiative

<sup>1</sup> The word "dictatorship," which has now acquired a very sinister meaning, means no more, in this context, than government in the interest of one class, and against other class interests. The reason why the present government of England cannot properly be called a dictatorship—although it could be argued that it acts in the interests of the City, or sections of the middle classes, and against the interests of other classes—is that there is a guaranteed alternative government ready to take over every five years. The Russian "dictatorship," or any régime whatsoever which has been set up as the result of a revolution, cannot allow an alternative government to exist in embryo unless that government subscribes to the same general principles as itself.



is limited to trade union matters, limited, in fact, to important details. The general policy he carries out is decided ultimately by the party's cabinet or Politburo. The party decides that more silver must be mined: the trade union representatives are bound to attempt to get more silver mined, and their duty is to safeguard the miners' health and standard of life in the process.

How then can it be said that the Supreme Congress' Praesidium and the Sovnarkom have any functions different from those of a civil service to perform? They have not, for the majority of the delegates to the Supreme Congress and all the members of the Sovnarkom are, in fact, members of the Communist Party. To put it plainly, the present Russian political system is intended to encourage the active participation of all citizens in the small day-to-day adjustments necessary to society, but reserves the larger initiative to a hand-picked aristocracy. The "withering away of the State" is, then, the abdication of the Communist Party. For when the political and economic problems of Russia have been solved, when all the five-year plans have succeeded, when there are no outside dangers that demand centralized direction, then the Communist Party's function will have vanished, and the social organization of the country will be undertaken by the various sovietic administrative bodies, and their elected committees. Government, in fact, will be replaced by administration, and the administration will be guided by the people—already trained to it for several generations.

Before the "withering away of the State" can be achieved several things have to happen. First of all, wars must cease, for wars demand governments, not administrations. And if wars are to cease, then all the countries of the world must either be administrations too or governments on the way to becoming administrations. They must, in fact, have common principles. At the same time the countries which have become or are becoming administrated societies must have achieved enough material prosperity to insure themselves against social instability.

The aim of the Communist Party in Russia, then, is to achieve the necessary amount of material prosperity and to train the Russian people for its future administrative tasks. The aim of the communist parties of the world associated in the Third International is to bring into being in their respective countries situations and predispositions which will hasten the "withering away" in Russia, and eventually in their own countries. The particular situation they wish to create at any one time in any one country must depend, of course, on the stage of political evolution which has been reached. In efficient and highly developed democratic countries, for instance, the communist parties will endeavour to instil friendly feelings towards Russia, encourage organizations for the maintenance of international security, and use the existing democratic institutions in a way which will raise the standard of life of the working class. In inefficient and disreputable democratic countries the communist parties will act in a more forceful manner,

and openly attempt to change the institutions themselves in the desired direction, either by violent or non-violent methods, the method depending on the amount of popular support they obtain. In countries where the profession of Marxism is a crime, they will attempt to overturn the existing institutions by conspiratorial methods, by secret agitation, and finally by revolution.

One of the tasks of the Communist Party of Russia, in its capacity as a member of the Third International, is to hasten the development of Marxist ideas in other countries in order to hasten the development of truly communist institutions in its own.

The breakdown of the post-war revolutions in Hungary, Finland, and Bulgaria, the failure of the German and Austrian social-democrats to set up régimes which were strong enough to resist counter-revolutions, the extraordinary powers of recovery shown by the great capitalist countries, and the final isolation of the revolution in Russia set all plans awry. After a certain measure of internal security had been established within Russia by means of the N.E.P., there were two possible policies which could have been adopted by the C.P. of Russia and the Third International, which was naturally enough dominated by Russia. One was the policy embodied in the slogan: Socialism in a single land. The other was embodied in the rival slogan: World Revolution.

After Lenin's death, the leadership of the Communist Party fell temporarily into the hands of a



triumvirate, Zinoviev, Kamenev, and Stalin. Trotsky was ill. When he returned in 1925 to supervise the electrical development of Russia, he soon found himself in opposition. The new economic policy had had wide repercussions. Intended primarily as a relief for the peasants and as a means of ensuring that the public should be provided with those consumption goods not yet produced by State industry, it restored to an enormous extent the influence of the submerged middle and lower middle classes. Stalin's slowness in clearing out private enterprise—Zinoviev was moving on to Trotsky's side—and his friendliness towards Bukharin, known to be right-wing, and Tomski, the moderate leader of the Russian trade unions, lent colour to Trotsky's assertion that the governing group had abandoned the aim of socialism for State capitalism and was favouring the middle classes.

But public opinion, although it did not go the whole way with Trotsky, certainly wanted the government to embark on its next step, to substitute public and co-operative trading for private retailing, and develop native resources. Stalin was sensitive enough to public opinion to realize that the demand was genuine and timely. But the cautious Georgian could not approve of the Trotsky plan. The Trotskyist arguments "denied the planned development of the economy of the U.S.S.R., in that they denied the law of the uneven development of capitalism, and asserted that the international division of labour stands higher than the dictatorship of the proletariat in a single country, and imperatively dictates

to its further development." Russia, said the Trotskyist opposition, could not possibly achieve her socialist aims without the support of other countries, which must be revolutionized. Isolated, she would devote all her energies to feverish internal reconstruction, and become so intent on purely technical problems that she would shelve the pressing problems of government. The feeding of the new town populations was an artificial problem: bribing and bullying the peasants by turns represented no solution. A Soviet China, now, would be far more helpful. Bukharin had been so impressed by the comparative success of the N.E.P. period that he was anxious not to move too fast. He proposed, instead, an agricultural two-year plan which would not harm the peasant proprietor, but would put him in touch with socialist marketing measures and modern methods, and acquaint him with the competition of the factory farm. Bukharin preferred to win over the successful peasant to socialist agriculture by setting the stage in such a way that his peasant would gradually become used to co-operative methods.

Stalin's plan was finally developed into the first Five-Year Plan. It repudiated Trotsky's international revolutionism and Bukharin's gradualism. But it finished the N.E.P. era. Stalin and the majority of the Communist Party had decided to head their policy: Socialism in a single land. Accordingly they set about making Russia independent of foreign countries as far as manufactured goods were concerned. First they developed the coal and electrical resources of the country, then the engineering

industry, concentrating on the production of rolling-stock and agricultural machinery. Finally, they launched a campaign against the richer peasants, and quite baldly gave them the alternative of joining the local collective or state farm, being put on to do public works at low wages, or being shifted to remote regions and settled on good virgin soil with companions with whom they were expected to form a "collective." The hardship the plan entailed for the *kulaks* was appalling: about a million people must have been uprooted from their homes. But collectivization went on until the party, frightened by the volume of discontent and thrown out in their calculations by many peasants' refusal to do more work than the necessary minimum for subsistence, adopted a milder policy. Three-quarters of the agricultural industry is now collectively managed, and membership of the collective farm has been made more attractive, for the collective farmer is allowed to retain or acquire a house, a garden, and enough animals to provide him with butter, milk, and eggs for his own family. The aims of the collectivization campaign—the guaranteeing of a regular food supply, and the education of the peasants in co-operative self-administration had been achieved, but only at the expense of crushing the inner-party minorities represented by Trotsky and Bukharin. Opposition to the "party line" had hitherto been able to manifest itself quite freely in party meetings and the press. While regular political organizations hostile to the policy of the C.P. were not allowed to exist, the various "oppositions" were



able to become quite influential by capturing parts of provincial administrations, state trusts, etc. The licence of Lenin's days was abolished, and henceforward any opposition to party policy after it had been ratified by the Party Congress and adopted by the government departments became a crime against the State. The suppression of Trotsky, Bukharin, and their followers put Stalin out of reach of a rival, but instead of stabilizing the régime it led to a still greater instability. For the "oppositions," instead of openly kicking up rows at congresses, took to backstairs intrigue, conspiracy, and assassination. In fact, they were, willy-nilly, forced into the tactics of the old Russian revolutionaries. One after another trials against Trotskyists, Mensheviks, Ukrainian separatists, "Prompartists," etc., cropped up, were often and improperly used for propaganda purposes, and had an unfortunate effect on Russian credit abroad. The influence of the G.P.U. or secret political police was allowed to increase until there were very definite signs that it was at odds with the government. The Communist Party itself showed signs of becoming prey to advanced persecution-mania. It would have been very much safer in the long run to allow the "oppositions" a certain amount of scope. Their repression not only made them more dangerous, but changed, to some extent, the character of the Russian Communist Party, which was inclined to forget its function as an order of Public Service and Enlightenment, and to become the Stalinist party.

The success of the government's experiments in

industrial planning and the consequent stabilization of the country's economy has led to a gentler attitude on the part of the party and the government towards the misfits of the régime. Members of the old professional classes, after a harassed and harassing period of suspicion and persecution, have now emerged as favoured citizens with all the privileges of the industrial workers and the confidence of the powers that be. The nature of these privileges, which are now being extended to cover the recently collectivized peasants and the inhabitants of the less accessible areas, are by now well known to the British public. They, in fact, consist of the right to make use of the extensive social services provided by the government.

The commonest form of criticism levelled at the Soviet Union is generally on these lines: the country is run by a single political party on totalitarian lines, and the fact that it spends a lot of its time in the provision of important and excellent social services does not really distinguish it sufficiently from rival totalitarian countries like Germany and Italy, which are also quite lavish in the provision of bread and circuses. This is the line of argument generally adopted by all those socialists who reject the doctrine of the "dictatorship of the proletariat." It is not the same as saying, with Colonel Blimp, that "Fascism and Communism are the same thing." The democratic socialist argues that he is not going to suppress his critical feelings about Russia just because Russia is menaced by the fascist powers. While he is ready to do all in his power to prevent Russia being

attacked, he is also going to prevent the socialist movement in his own country from adopting those particularly Russian conceptions of social organization which he considers against the wider interests of the movement. While the Russian Communist Party remains the chief influence in the Third International, and is largely responsible for its policy, the democratic socialist is going to remain suspicious of the intentions of his compatriot communists. If, on the other hand, the Third International were to modify its policy even further than it already has, a united socialist movement would be a possibility. The recent modification of the Third International's policy was a reflection of Russian foreign policy, but its repercussions on the membership of the communist parties themselves may have interesting and permanent results. Forced into alliance with the democratic socialist parties by the dangers of aggressive fascism, the communists found themselves in touch with a popular movement at last. The "officer class" mentality which had been fostered by their segregation is beginning to break down. Their isolation from the masses of their own country had been compensated for by an irrational devotion to Russia. Perhaps the contraction of local loyalties will give rise to a more healthily critical attitude.

The important thing to remember about the Third International is that its "class-basis" is much more mixed than that of the Second International. Apart from the French Communist Party, which represents a genuine radical trend among the French working classes, the leading sectors of



communist parties of contemporary Europe are largely influenced by *déclassé* members of the middle classes and the unemployed. And this explains two important things about them: their addiction to theoretical disputes, and their failure to influence the great trade union organizations. An exception could be made in the case of the Communist Party of Great Britain, which contains among its older members a number of militant syndicalists who were active during and after the Great War. Consequently its industrial policy has always been rather efficient and it has escaped the heresy-hunting fevers which have attacked the continental parties. Its influence is more or less circumscribed to certain hardly-hit districts in Wales and Scotland, and in these, its agitations on behalf of the local population have been pretty successful.

The communism-fascism fallacy received support from the fact that many members of the German Communist Party were known to have joined the Nazis later on. The German party, since it had been composed, to quite a large extent, of unemployed workers and disgruntled members of the middle classes, was unstable. It had carried on violent propaganda against the slow-moving Social-Democratic Party, and had attacked its trade unions. Many of its members, dissatisfied with the old trade unions and out of touch with the better-paid workmen, had no real stake in their own democracy. German democracy had thrown them out of work: German social-democrats had deserted them when they went on strike. When democracy was attacked

by the Nazis they could not be wholehearted in its defence. Some of its wilder fringe found Hitler's programme attractive. The social-democrats, representing after all the hard core of the German working class, were attacked on two sides. The communists, representing its militant vanguard, did not know how to conduct a defensive campaign: they had left themselves nothing to defend.

Hitler's successful career had important repercussions on the Third International and on Russia. We have already mentioned the drawing together of the two left movements. In Russia, it led to a reorientation of her foreign policy, which now sought friendly relations with the democratic powers, and which was carried further when it became evident that the rich Ukraine was coveted by Germany. The chief stumbling-block standing in the way of mutual confidence between the democracies and Russia was the existence of the Third International. To all conservative democrats Russia was still the country of 1917, pledged to foment a world revolution through the agency of the Third International. The expulsion of Trotsky, and the adoption of "socialism in a single land" as the basis of the Russian Communist Party's policy made very little impression on them. The fact that Dimitrov's accession to the leadership of the Third International had marked a deep change in its policy was not significant to them. The primitive brutality of the Russian government's methods served to confirm their belief in Russian malevolence. But in fact the Third International in its present form, strongly

nationalist in its French manifestation, agitating for an alliance between all the anti-fascist elements in England, obedient and patriotic in China, and cautious in Spain, is a guarantee of Russia's attitude of enmity towards fascism, and friendliness towards the democracies. If the Russian government were to sever its connection with the Third International it might mean two things. It might, possibly, be a symptom of a move to the right, strongly pressed by France and England in a moment of crisis. It might, more probably, mean a move to the left, and take the form of a destructive reorganization. A move to the left, in terms of foreign policy, would mean the revival of the old anti-imperialist policy, the patching up of the quarrel with Germany, the deflection of her war aims westwards, and the concentration of Russian effort in the Far East, aiming at the defeat of Japan. If this policy, as it is generally supposed, was the one advocated by Marshal Tukhachevsky and his associates in the army, his recent execution for so-called "Trotskyist" and treasonable activities should reassure the western powers. But such a movement is not inconceivable and might take place without the supersession of Stalin if the western democracies persisted in a defeatist policy. Russia, abandoned by the west, might well consent to another but milder Brest-Litovsk and strive to make up for her lost resources peacefully in the East. In any case, any part Russia is likely to play in a future war between the democracies and the dictatorships is strictly limited by geography and communications, and depends on the role of the



adjacent countries Poland and Rumania. But the fact that Russia is threatened on two sides by aggressive powers has strengthened her national sentiment, and the sense that her support is necessary for a successful war for the "defence of civilization" has given her an increased pride in her own intellectual heritage.

To return to the communism-fascism fallacy.

In the first place Russia is not "communist." By its own confession it is State-capitalist—that is to say that, outside the co-operative and "incop" movements, the State is the employer. The State is an enlightened employer who is not concerned with making profits, but who distributes "profits" in wages and services. The employee, though his standard of life is low, is in a better position than in capitalist countries—he is paid, for instance, according to proficiency and not according to the laws of supply and demand. But he can be sacked, has to obey orders, and can only influence the conduct of the enterprise he works in in so far as it affects his health and safety. He is being encouraged to make suggestions about his own efficiency. When this activity does not need encouragement any longer and becomes an accepted part of trade union business, then socialism will be a little nearer. While the main structure of Russian economy is State capitalist, co-operative production and distribution, and communal organization in agriculture and fishing, all socialist forms of economy, play a very important part in it. The central government, as we have seen, is a paternal despotism upheld by a co-optive

aristocracy, and informed by a body of doctrine. Local government, on the other hand, is democratic. Can this curious *mélange* be related to socialism, to some sort of germ within socialism which develops in this way?

In the first place, it has nothing to do with the Marxist conception of the "dictatorship of the proletariat"—nothing to do with the example of the Paris Commune. For the Commune had been democratic in the "western" sense, and was based upon universal suffrage, a party system, and freedom of the press and of association. Marx's criticisms of it did not question the validity of absolute democracy. Lenin's interpretation of the lessons of the Commune was quite independent: the opposition of "sovietism" to "democracy" is Leninism, not Marxism.

It is only by harking back to the earlier phases of the revolution in Russia that we can understand its present development. Let us recapitulate the main problems of 1917 in tabular form:

1. The Russian working class is rather small; the country is backward industrially.
2. There is a huge peasantry hungry for land.
3. The middle class is weak and unable to carry through a revolution on its own: it is always inclined to desert.
4. The poorer classes are uneducated and unpractised in politics.
5. The intelligentsia is dissatisfied, but must find allies before it can change anything.
6. The old régime is discredited.

There are three parties of importance, and while all are anxious for a change-over, their aims are different. The Mensheviks want to achieve a liberal democracy with the support of the working classes. They want Russia to fall in line with the western democracies, in order that the working class shall develop along western lines. They see the socialist revolution a long way off, only possible after a long period of training within liberal democracy. Their party is a mass party.

The social revolutionaries believe that Russia can jump the capitalist phase. They want to achieve a federation of agricultural communes. They regard Russia as a predominantly agricultural country. They believe in anarchist democracy. They want an immediate agrarian revolution.

The Bolsheviks, until 1917, wanted a democratic dictatorship of all the poorer classes, the immediate nationalization of industry and banking and the division of the big estates. After 1917, when it becomes clear that liberal democracy is ineffective and likely to be swamped by the reactionaries, they oppose parliamentary democracy with their own version of "proletarian dictatorship"—a soviet system guided by a party of professional revolutionaries. They believe in the modernization of Russia at the hands, not of the capitalists, but of the revolutionary intelligentsia.

It should be evident by now why the other two main revolutionary parties were not allowed to exist after the Bolsheviks consolidated themselves.



## CHAPTER IX

### THE INTERNATIONAL CLASS WAR IN SPAIN

THE civil war in Spain has been, and is, a crucial period in the history of international socialism. It is from this point of view that this chapter will mainly discuss the vicissitudes of Spanish socialism over the last half-dozen years—for although the military civil war only broke out in 1936, a social civil war had been in existence long before that date. It is impossible, within the limits imposed, to provide anything in the nature of a history of the war itself, or a detailed account of the constitutional complexities which preceded it. The documentary material does not yet exist for a general analysis of the period between 1931 and 1938. All that is possible is a limited and incomplete survey of the theoretical divergences within the Spanish Popular Front and their repercussions on the parties affiliated to the Second, Third, and Fourth Internationals. All the issues are far from clear, but even though a rebel victory will prevent their eventual clarification, they have raised questions of enormous importance to the socialist movement.

Any reader of the recent history of Spain will be

immediately struck by the inefficiency and corruption of most of its governments. Governmental ineptitude and political racketeering were a reflection of the extraordinarily anachronistic and chaotic character of Spanish economy. Its economic development did not proceed by the fairly recognizable stages observable in other European countries; it was held up constantly by strong vested interests. The cattle and grain interests, strongly organized and backed by the Church, the largest landowner in the country, were able to obstruct the industrialization of the country. Industrialization would have implied, as the old Tories realized in England, a fall in agricultural prices, and rising wages. Consequently, the Spanish landlords prevented their country from becoming the manufacturing centre of a food-producing Empire. The strong organization of the big agricultural interests and their paramount influence in Madrid made two important modifications in the nature of rising Spanish capitalism. Economically, it encouraged precocity—a counter-organization in the form of trusts and combines, a strong tendency towards the acquirement of big, safe monopolies, and strengthening links with international concerns. Politically, since it was very localized and centred chiefly in Catalonia, the Basque country, and the Asturias, it made its own the legitimate demands for cultural independence of these regions, and moved towards the capture of political influence under cover of regionalist aspirations. This kind of economic structure did not leave much room for a national middle class, although it

encouraged, cynically enough, the local patriotism of small middle-class groups. Like the agricultural interest, when it got within striking distance of political power, it blackmailed a harassed civil service by demands for tariffs, subsidies, and monopolies, using politicians and discarding them by turns. Parliamentary government, itself hampered by archaic procedure, became thoroughly corrupted, and the corridors of the Cortes a sort of exchange and mart. We can see a mild reflection of this situation in England and France to-day, where, under cover of a popular demand for national security in a recognized emergency, industrial interests are milking confused and conciliatory governments.

Naturally the ups-and-downs of the struggle between these two main interests translated itself for the poorer classes into great hardship. If the industrialists won, the peasantry starved, if the agriculturists won, the town workmen faced a doleless unemployment. Naturally also, the reaction to this ding-dong pauperization often took the form of a desperate protest against all authority, since what authority amounted to, in fact, was the authority of landlords and industrialists and of their allies and agents. This protest was canalized by the Anarchosyndicalist movement.

Anarchosyndicalism, as its name implies, is an amalgamation of Anarchism and Syndicalism, and both are based on the governing thesis of the First International: "The emancipation of the workers can only be won by the workers themselves, and the



economic emancipation of the working class is therefore the great end to which every political movement ought to be subordinated." The first Spanish working-class movement of the 'forties, initiated by the textile workers of Barcelona, fell under the influence of Pi y Margall, the President of the First Republic. Pi y Margall shared the "mutualist" ideas of Proudhon and the democratic individualism of Jefferson. He preached an extensive federalism, the limitation of State powers, and the gradual introduction of an economic order based on co-operation. Under his influence the Barcelona workers started trade unions and co-operatives. The government tried to dissolve the movement by force, and a general strike followed in 1855. An open revolt followed the strike, and its suppression led to the formation of an underground trade union organization. In 1868 Bakunin published his famous *Address to the Spanish Workers* and sent a delegation to Spain to win the "mutualist" unions to the anarchist section of the International. He was entirely successful. His views chimed in particularly well with Margall's federalism, Proudhon's "mutualism," and the savage anti-authoritarian feelings of the persecuted unionists. At a secret congress in 1870, addressed by Bakunin's friend, Farga Pellicer, a resolution of great importance was passed. It was the "fundamental line" of the Spanish Anarchist movement.

"All the struggles of the peoples towards better conditions which have been based on the maintenance of the State have always been crushed by the

State. Authority and privilege are the pillars of the present social injustice. Therefore our task is to overthrow them and to build a new order based on equality and freedom. Any collaboration of the workers with the bourgeoisie really means a consolidation of the present policy and the crippling of the revolutionary socialist action of the working class. Therefore this congress advises all organizations in the International to repudiate all attempts at collaboration with the State in the hopes of social reform, and recommends them to turn their whole energies to a federalist organization of the producers who alone can assure the success of the social revolution. This federal organization is the true expression of the interests of Labour and must be built up without reference to governments."

For seven years after its foundation the Spanish section of the International endured an unintermitted repression which hardened its conspiratorial and nihilist character. Even after the laws banning working-class associations had been lifted, and after the movement had come out into the open as the "Federación de Trabajadores de la Región Española," it was subject to all the rigours of a *droit administratif*. It answered police raids with revolvers, lock-outs with dynamite. But like the Russian Narodnik movement it had other methods of propaganda besides "direct action." Francisco Ferrer, the movement's most gifted publicist, started to found "rationalist schools" in Catalonia. Their main aim was to undermine the clerical monopoly of education. It also employed

its literary talent in a violent and picturesque journalism.

It was rather strange that the anarchist movement should be strongest in Catalonia, where industry was more highly developed than anywhere else in Spain. One would have expected to find that Barcelona was the centre of a modern socialist-democratic movement. Three reasons have been advanced for this apparent anomaly. Firstly, that anarchism found ready support among the work-seeking immigrant peasants from the south, already trained in "direct action" in numerous hunger risings. Secondly, that anarchist federalism coincided to some extent with Catalan separatism. Thirdly, that the violence of the Catalan industrial struggles was not amenable to trade unionism of the social-democratic type. For in Barcelona, lock-outs were as frequent as strikes, and armed "scab" unions were run by the employers on notorious Pinkerton lines.

In fact, the social-democratic trade union organization of Spain, the U.G.T., could hardly appeal to the Barcelona workers, for collective bargaining cannot proceed when one party to the bargain refuses to accept it on principle. Spanish social-democracy started in 1871 with an attempt by Paul Lafargue, Marx's son-in-law, to found a socialist party in Madrid, and so to rescue the Spanish working class from "anarchist opportunism." It accomplished little until the 'eighties, when Pablo Iglesias, an indefatigable trade union organizer in almost every country in the Iberian family, revived it and subsequently formed the U.G.T. in 1888.



The U.G.T. was a trade union organization on conventional Second International lines. It was centralized, had paid officials, and co-operated with the parliamentary Socialist Party.

In 1911, the anarchosyndicalists finally organized their own trade union movement on a national scale in the C.N.T., organizing in its first year over half a million workers. The C.N.T. is "non-political and anti-political." It is open to all workers, whatever their views. But no worker attached to a political party can occupy a responsible office. Most of the organizational work is done voluntarily, by workmen in their time off. The more important organizers are paid, but never get more than ordinary skilled workers in their trade. The formation of a bureaucracy is prevented by a regular time limit. Even the General Secretary of the C.N.T. is elected for one year only. Since the anarchosyndicalists maintain that militancy can only be preserved by allowing small trade union groups the greatest measure of self-determination, strikes can be called without reference to the General Secretariat. The form of organization they have adopted reflects their federalist views.

Workers in each locality join the unions of their trades, and these unions combine regionally in "labour cartels," which issue propaganda and co-operate in any strike action or agitation called for by a trade. The labour cartels are grouped together in a national federation, which co-ordinates the local bodies and their propaganda, and ensures wider co-operation between local bodies

during emergencies. The trades themselves are organized federally with the same trade throughout the country, and these national trade federations are in turn allied with related trades in the same branch of industry, in so-called "industrial alliances." While the Federation of Labour Cartels co-ordinates horizontal strike action and agitation, the Federation of Industrial Alliances performs the same function vertically. The C.N.T., therefore, is mainly organized with the general strike and the large-scale industrial strike in view. Since it does not pay strike benefit, it relies entirely on "solidarity," and, within the C.N.T., this is never refused. Its weapon against strike breaking by the "scab" unions or by the U.G.T. is the armed picket, and when this is broken by the police, the last line of defence is the revolver and the home-made bomb.

The anarchosyndicalist hostility to the State implied, until recently, a total boycott of parliamentary and municipal elections. The C.N.T. proposed to rely entirely on the general strike for the consummation of the social revolution. The social aim it had in view was "a federation of autonomous societies exchanging products on the basis of need, not equivalence." There would be no central authority, only a central advisory council. The autonomous societies would govern themselves on principles of mutual confidence, guided by public opinion. Individuals should have no limit placed on their personal freedom, except that of "community consciousness." Money would be replaced at first

by labour notes, but ultimately, when "community consciousness" had become strong enough, the producer would be rewarded according to his needs. Its aims, then, were anarchist, but its methods syndicalist. For the C.N.T. had adopted Pelloutier's views, and proposed to follow up the general strike and "direct action," in the form of sabotage and terrorization, by workers' control of industry and finally by "collectivization": the ownership of industry by the union of producers. As industry became "collectivized" capitalism would disappear without the imposition of a centralized class police, without a "dictatorship of the proletariat."

The Syndicalist conception of the social revolution demanded, as its first necessity, the unity of the working class. While the U.G.T. remained the dominant trade union organization in Madrid and industrial Bilbao and was as influential as the C.N.T. in mining Asturias, the C.N.T. had to decide on one of two courses: to smash the U.G.T. by terrorist methods, or to come to some sort of agreement with it. The congress which founded the C.N.T. in 1911 decided not to recruit from the U.G.T., on condition that the latter would establish contact with the C.N.T. with a view to united action. During the post-war disturbances, when the radical and separatist elements joined hands with the unions in an attempt to establish a progressive republic, both unions worked together. But the attachment of the U.G.T. to the parliamentary Socialist Party, and consequently to more legal methods of agitation, caused a rift, and the alliance came to pieces. The



C.N.T. fought on alone, deserted by both the U.G.T. and its radical allies. But during the short period of united action an interesting development had occurred. Delegates from both unions attended the Moscow conferences which led to the formation of the Third International. Losovsky, the commissioner of the Red T.U. International, urged the syndicalist delegates to accept the control of the Third International. They disagreed, and the matter was put off for discussion to an international trade union conference scheduled to take place in 1921. In 1920 the syndicalist delegates, including representatives of the French C.G.T. "left," the American I.W.W., and groups from Holland, Germany, Italy, etc., decided on their conditions of entry into the Red Trade Union International. The 1921 congress, dominated by the communist unions, rejected their conditions. The attempt to unite the Spanish unions on the basis of a modified Third International type of organization had failed, but not without interesting consequences to the C.N.T. For, during the *pourparlers*, some sections of it had agitated in Spain for a reconsideration of the C.N.T. attitude towards the hated "dictatorship of the proletariat." The purists of the C.N.T. attacked these sections, drove them out of the union, and may have had a hand in their mysterious disappearance during the Barcelona riots of the 'twenties between the C.N.T. and the "scabs." The purist majority decided to strengthen its position and in 1927 the F.A.I. was formed, to restore the fundamental anarchist line.

Very little information can be obtained about F.A.I.; it was illegal until 1936, does not publish figures, or broadcast its decisions. Its membership is co-opted from those members of the C.N.T. who have proved their capacity as "direct action," non-collaborationist anarchists. It would be unfair on insufficient evidence to call it a terrorist secret society, but there is no doubt that it carried out for the C.N.T. those methods of "direct action" which required particular ruthlessness and anonymity.<sup>1</sup> By 1932 it had gained control of the C.N.T.

There were other small revolutionary and socialist groups besides the F.A.I.-C.N.T. and the socialist-U.G.T. formations. Before 1931, there was a small and unimportant Communist Party. In Catalonia, there was a more important "left Communist" Party, which rejected the discipline of the Third International. This was Joaquin Maurin's Workers' and Peasants' Block (B.O.C.), which was later to merge with Andrés Nin's breakaway communist left to form the ill-fated P.O.U.M. In Catalonia also were centred the Rabaissaires, a league of small tenants and share-croppers directing their energies against the big landlords. It was under the influence of the Catalan Esquerra (or "left"), an advanced liberal party not averse to accepting some of the socialists' formulas. This party, to which the former President of Catalonia, Luis Companys, belongs, also controlled the C.A.D.C.I., a Barcelona union of

<sup>1</sup> For a convincing description of the tense moral climate of anarchosyndicalism, the reader should refer to Ramon Sender's novel, *Seven Red Sundays*.

workers of the "white-collar" type, not affiliated to the U.G.T. because the U.G.T. was centralist, nor to the C.N.T. because it was not interested in class-militancy but in improving wage standards by gradual steps. In 1932 a section of the C.N.T., under Pestaña and Peiró grew tired of its intransigence in the face of offers from the Catalan Esquerra and broke off from the union to form a syndicalist party. Most of these parties had their youth groups, as did the socialists and the F.A.I., and the communists and the P.O.U.M. controlled some trade unions.

After the failure of the 'post-war attempt to establish a republic, a military dictatorship under Primo de Rivera maintained the tottering monarchy. Primo de Rivera represented the interests of the big manufacturers very efficiently and certainly did a lot towards making Spain a modern country. The U.G.T. leader, Largo Caballero, accepted the portfolio of labour in Rivera's cabinet, in order to keep the U.G.T. intact. That he succeeded in doing, but at the cost of arousing a lasting suspicion and hostility in the C.N.T. The Rivera dictatorship, as with all political movements based on no more valuable moral concepts than "law and order," became more and more reactionary and drifted towards a fascistic "corporativism." The U.G.T. detached itself thoroughly, and in 1931, supported the Provisional government that abolished the monarchy and the military dictatorship of Rivera's successor, Berenguer.

In 1931, the socialists and the U.G.T. had a



difficult problem to face. The "radical" and liberal middle-class parties had achieved in Spain a revolution similar to the Russian revolution of 1905. Primo de Rivera had "modernized" the economic structure of Spain: the radicals—really a conservative republican party—and the liberals represented by Manuel Azaña's Izquierda Republicana and the Catalan Esquerra—sought to modernize its political and, within limits, its social structure. The intellectual leader of the revolution was Azaña. Azaña was a really progressive liberal. His intention was to set up a rational and enlightened sort of republic, which would introduce liberal, secular education, expropriate the big landlords and the church and turn over their lands to the hungry peasantry. He wanted to democratize the armed forces, bring down the high prices of food and other necessities by lowering the ridiculously high tariff-walls behind which landlords and manufacturers had sheltered, and to introduce a form of industrial arbitration which recognized trade union collective bargaining rights. This was a programme which the socialists could not possibly disapprove of. But it implied the existence of a large, active, and progressive middle class, which did not in fact exist outside of Barcelona and Bilbao. It implied, also, that the agricultural and manufacturing interests who had supported Primo de Rivera would take their defeat in a liberal spirit, and be content to occupy the role of a critical parliamentary opposition. It left out of consideration, too, the fact that the poorest sections of the Spanish working class and peasantry, led by the

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F.A.I.-C.N.T., were in no mood, after long years of extreme privation, to wait upon necessarily slow constitutional adjustments. Caballero calculated that the defence of the liberal republic was an essential duty for the Socialist Party, and hoped that the force of circumstances would show Azaña that, with no large middle class behind him, he must rely on the support of the organized working classes. There seemed a fair chance that the liberal republic would, by Scandinavian methods, evolve slowly towards a social-democracy. Consequently he entered the coalition cabinet as Minister of Labour, and the U.G.T. became a privileged, semi-official organization.

The F.A.I., after expelling the syndicalist group under Pestaña and Peiró, who were prepared to give the republic a chance, led a series of unsuccessful insurrections against the "bourgeois" republic and the "socialist blacklegs." They were not at all inclined to avoid a revolutionary opportunity on mere political considerations. Their action frightened the conservative radicals and strengthened the right, and in 1932 the adherents of the old régime rose under General Sanjurjo. Sanjurjo's revolt was premature and easily dealt with, and in the reaction against him which followed it, Azaña was able to put into effect an instalment of agrarian reform, and to begin to break down the rigid caste system of the army. But his offensive was not speedy enough. The right, finding a new and able leader in Gil Robles, began to reorganize effectively, and brought the supporters of the old régime, the officers, the

conservative republicans and the Church into a new political *bloc*, the Federation of Spanish Autonomous Right Parties, or C.E.D.A., based on an offensive against Azaña's agrarian reform and secularizing tendencies and a demand for the "revision" of the constitution. The time was not yet ripe for the overthrowing of the new republic: the C.E.D.A. concentrated on two peaceful methods of attack—destroying the republic's financial credit, and driving a wedge between the conservative and progressive republicans, represented by Lerroux and Azaña respectively.

Lerroux replaced Azaña's government and, supported by the C.E.D.A., began to undo the reforms of 1931 and 1932. The arbitration machinery set up by Azaña was allowed to break down, and employers refused to take back workmen dismissed for political reasons in 1931. The municipal governments set up by Azaña were abolished, and the agrarian laws repealed. The socialists were in a quandary: the liberal republic they had helped to set up was breaking up before their eyes. The C.N.T. said "I told you so" to the socialists, and swung again into fruitless insurrection. The peasants in Extremadura and Andalusia when they realized that Azaña's promised feast was being whisked away by Lerroux, rioted. In the Basque country and Catalonia, the middle-class parties, realizing the dangers of a centralism which would allow the big landlords to regain their power, carried on intensive separatist campaigns. It certainly looked like a revolutionary situation.



For a long time the socialists were uncertain, and while they debated on the propriety of a counter-attack, the central government's Tribunal of Constitutional Guarantees passed a ruling which clearly demonstrated that Catalonian autonomy was menaced. The socialists now had to decide whether or not to support Catalonia. All over the country, "Workers' Alliances," attempts to unite all working-class parties, sprang up, including, in some districts, the C.N.T., in others the growing Communist Party, and in Catalonia enjoying the benevolent neutrality of the Esquerra. Azaña was contemplating a "defensive *putsch*," and succeeded in forming a bloc of all the anti-C.E.D.A. republican parties. Meanwhile, the right-wing youth organizations had begun to move in a semi-fascist direction, were adopting Mussolinesque war-cries, and arming. At this point the Socialist Party, led by Caballero, Indalecio Prieto, Alvarez del Vayo, and Luis Araquistain decided that, the moment the C.E.D.A. got its foot in the cabinet, they would support the "defensive *putsch*" of Azaña and Companys.

In October 1934 Lerroux formed a cabinet which included three C.E.D.A. members in key positions. The "revision" of the constitution was at hand.

In Barcelona, Companys declared "the Catalan State within the Spanish republic"—but his police chief refused to arm the Catalonian Workers' Alliance and the C.A.D.C.I., with the inevitable result that the town garrison easily put down the revolt. The Rabaissaires, clamouring for arms, arrived too late. The F.A.I., disliking the "political"

complexion of the Workers' Alliance, held off until too late. In Madrid, the U.G.T. and the C.N.T. came out together in a general strike. In the Asturias, something much bigger was afoot.

In the Asturias basin a really comprehensive system of Workers' Alliances had been formed by anarchosyndicalists, socialists and communists. The three parties agreed to shelve their theoretical differences, and formed a united party—the U.H.P. Revolutionary committees organized supplies and requisitions, took over the banks and the armament factories, ran the municipal services, and directed a unified workers' militia and an army medical corps. It was a full-dress rehearsal for a proletarian revolution. The Asturias revolt, however, was isolated from the other sporadic movements. Lerroux sent three generals, a colonel, Moors, Foreign Legionaries, and the Civil Guard against the Asturians, who, after a week's fighting, were "liquidated" with brutal efficiency.

The Lerroux-Robles government emerged triumphant, but shaken. The socialists had compromised themselves by their part in the insurrection and withdrew from the Cortes. The liberals were scattered, either in exile or in prison. The C.E.D.A. was now in a position to dictate to parliament, but the radicals, willing enough to accept C.E.D.A. dictation, were unwilling to give up their positions and their political influence. The internal politics of Spain now became a subtle tug-of-war between the two parties. And meanwhile the economic situation was becoming acute. The agricultural

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interests, faced by a slump in world agricultural prices, demanded that the State should buy a part of their produce. But the State could not find consumers for this produce unless wages were raised. And the industrial interests were in no position to raise wages. Over 200 million pesetas went to subsidize the agriculturalists, while wheat rotted in the State granaries. The industrial interests also demanded subsidies. And unemployment in town and country increased enormously. At first the government, or rather a succession of cabinets tried to meet the situation by cutting down government expenses, civil service pay, and by putting through a conversion which hit middle-class incomes severely. The C.E.D.A. accelerated the counter-reformation in the army, in education, and in the agrarian laws but took no responsibility for the actions of the embarrassed government.

Robles was waiting for the radicals to commit suicide. The opportunity occurred, but rather too prematurely; the revelation that members of the cabinet had been involved in shady financial scandals. Robles, informed of these for quite a long time, had been waiting for the psychological moment to denounce the radicals. When Azaña brought the scandals out into the open, it became quite clear that Robles had been husbanding the information for much too long. Public opinion moved against both radicals and C.E.D.A., and the President of the Cortes was forced to entrust the preparation of the coming elections to an imaginary "Centre Party"—an *ad hoc* collection of radical and



conservative odds and ends with no support in the country.

The left followed the lessons of 1934. It was abundantly clear that the public excitement aroused by Azaña's revelations was not the prelude to a social revolution—but a natural reaction against political parties that had shown themselves to be reactionary, inefficient, and crooked. Added to this general feeling was the more conscious determination of the U.G.T. and of the Communist Party—the determination that the first political necessity was to prevent the republic from falling, ever again, into the hands of persons or parties whose avowed object was to destroy it. The C.N.T. still believed that the social revolution would follow automatically if the capitalist régime were smashed, and were opposed to anything which looked remotely like a reformist government. Still, they were not unfriendly to the great anti-fascist movement which swept through the country, Azaña at its head.

This movement translated itself into an electoral alliance which stretched all the way from republican groups to the right of Azaña to the P.O.U.M.—the Popular Front.

The Popular Front Pact, signed by all these parties, was not a revolutionary document. Its ethos was that of the republic of 1931, and, in fact, the measures the parties pledged themselves to pass were almost exactly similar to those projected by the first Azaña government. It did not even accept the principle of public relief. But its main importance lay in its "offensive" chances. For Azaña and his

friends had despaired of winning over the anti-republican diehards by liberal diplomacy, and now pledged themselves to take strong action against any elements found intriguing against the republican government. This meant, of course, the reorganization of the police, and the weeding out of actively disloyal officers from the army. The Popular Front Pact, then, had, and was meant to have, a temporary validity only. When the republic was thoroughly restored, and the danger of revolt by the aristocratic officers and the semi-fascist armed bands of the right had disappeared, then all parties were to resume their liberty of action.

The C.E.D.A. meanwhile was not idle. Robles made approaches to Calvo Sotelo, leader of Renovación Española, a monarchist organization with a fascist programme of the corporative type. Nothing concrete resulted from this *démarche*, but the direction in which Robles was moving became more and more plain. Falange Española, a similar organization but under national-socialist rather than fascist inspiration, proposed a national counter-revolutionary front. This organization, more ardent and *putschist* than the others, remained rather on the edge of the right electoral alliance now composed of the C.E.D.A., Sotelo's men, the big agrarian interests, the Traditionalists—a monarchist group favouring the Carlist pretender—a small party representing big industrial interests under Melquiades Alvarez, and a few other small groups. The main parties on the right had an efficient shock force in their youth groups—all of which were naturally more

theoretically inclined to one form or another of totalitarianism.<sup>1</sup>

The elections took place on February 16th in an atmosphere of suppressed excitement, atrocity stories, and all the usual accusations of electoral corruption. Most competent observers, however, maintain that there was less violence than usual. The results were: Popular Front, 265; centre (including the Basque nationalists), 64; right, 144. It would have been perfectly possible for the right to have obtained, under the Spanish electoral system, a majority of votes in the country although it obtained a minority of seats. The centre and right together did in fact obtain a few thousand more votes than the Popular Front. But if the Basque nationalists, who later joined the Popular Front government, are to be counted in as definitely against the right, the balance of votes was markedly the other way. The balance for the left ought to be increased a little in view of the fact that in the elections in Granada it was definitely proved by a parliamentary committee that 58,000 odd false votes had been recorded, under pressure from armed "right" gunmen.

Before all the election returns had come in, but when the Popular Front victory was already inevitable, news reached the War Office and the Valladares cabinet that a military revolt was being planned. The news leaked out, and the adherents of the left came out into the streets and stayed there

<sup>1</sup> The most important of these paramilitary forces were: the C.E.D.A.s J.A.P.S., Falange's J.O.N.S., and the Traditionalist Requetés.



in order to prevent, by passive pressure of numbers, any sortie from the barracks. A number of riots took place, and some hundreds of churches were burnt.<sup>1</sup>

Azaña formed a cabinet entirely composed of left republicans, and it started to work its way back to the situation of 1931, considerably embarrassed by the fact that the anxious peasants had anticipated the agrarian reforms of the government and had simply squatted on the empty and expropriated lands of the monarchist nobility. A number of industrial concerns had been left derelict, partly because they were bankrupt, partly because a number of employers had left the country rather than accept Azaña's industrial arbitration programme. These the trade unions took over and ran in the expectation that the central or local government would later legalize their position. The streets were still full of the workmen on the look-out for any movement in the barracks.

Prieto's advice to the socialists was to use the greatest possible caution. He was anxious to prevent the working-class parties from indulging in any demonstrations or demands which would embarrass the Azaña government, or which would give the right parties an excuse to make common cause with the left republicans as they had done with the Lerroux radicals. Under his pressure, the Popular Front organizations modified their demands, but it

<sup>1</sup> This inexcusable action has been placed at the door of the F.A.I.-C.N.T. It seems pretty certain that anarchist elements were chiefly responsible for it, but it seems only fair to add that the responsible organs of F.A.I.-C.N.T. strongly condemned the practice.

was harder to convince the F.A.I.-C.N.T.—who had voted, for the first time in their lives, for the left, on trade union rather than political grounds. Strikes were frequent, and at the same time the “right” youth organizations paraded the streets, armed and uniformed.

Azaña kept his head well. Any news which might inflame political passions was carefully censored. All his parliamentary utterances were heartening but unprovocative. His main object was to obtain the removal of the President, Alcalá-Zamora, who had been guilty of breaches of constitutional law,<sup>1</sup> with the least possible fuss.

It was unfortunate that the municipal elections had to be put off to arrange for the presidential election. The intervening period not only made the psychological tension unbearable, it enabled the militant forces of the right to organize more effectively. Shooting broke out again, strikes turned into battles, unpopular employers were killed, leading trade unionists were found dead, arms were continually being unearthed. It was imperative to restore order, but what order? The fascist order, the order of the Workers' Alliances, or the order of a “national” government pledged to take strong action against C.N.T.?

At first Prieto had seriously thought of accepting the premiership in a “national” government, with Azaña as President, which would include right republicans. Caballero and the U.G.T. were

<sup>1</sup> The removal of Alcalá-Zamora had been one of the election demands of the C.E.D.A.

bitterly against this manoeuvre. It would, in their opinion, settle nothing and give the right more rope. The socialists would find themselves the prisoners of a frightened centre open to blandishments from the right, and would lose the confidence of their electors. As news of fascist conspiracies and plots against the lives of liberal and socialist leaders was made public by the police, Prieto's resolution changed. It became clear that the right were not going to play a parliamentary game: the essential thing for the Socialist Party to do was to stick to the Popular Front pact, and to attempt to draw the working-class parties together against the threatened attack. It became more and more clear that a stable government could not be achieved by co-operation with the parliamentary centre and centre-right; any attempt to neutralize the parliamentary opposition to the régime was hopeless, for, practically speaking, it was no longer in the Cortes but in the hands of the extra-parliamentary right groups. Had not Sotelo and Robles openly declared that the parliamentary system was so much rubbish and that the only solution for Spain was the fascist corporative State?

The liberals were undecided. To move to the left, while the C.N.T. still maintained an intransigent attitude, declaring strikes and sniping at U.G.T. workmen who took their places, would look weak. On the other hand more and more disturbing information, showing without a possibility of doubt that the right militias and the army, with backing from Germany and Italy, were carefully preparing



their *putsch*, demonstrated that no time could be lost angling for an "arrangement." The liberals hoped that they could break the anarchist strikes *and* round up the disaffected officers and officials in the short time at their disposal. When the *putsch* came they would have the services loyally at their backs, and would have saved their faces as supporters of law and order. In any case the time was not yet ripe for taking the working-class parties into their confidence, or for supplementing the police with armed trade union patrols.

The liberals had miscalculated badly. On July 12th José del Castillo, a police officer who had been responsible for discovering a Sotelist plot against the Premier, was shot. A reprisal was not slow to come: in the early morning of the 13th Sotelo's body was found in the street. The government closed all the fascist and anarchist clubs in Madrid. But the rebellion was now a matter of hours.

It is not within the scope of this book to describe the actual military history of the revolt. It must suffice for the time being to state that the rebel plan had been to converge on Madrid, and to bring over foreign legionary and Moorish troops from Morocco to strengthen their forces. The rebels had counted on paralysing the government by mutiny and making a swift march on the capital. The control of the rebellion had been placed in military hands, and it had been decided that the "pacification" of the country should be first entrusted to a junta of generals, and then passed on to a "unified" cabinet which would include representatives of all the main

parties of the national counter-revolutionary front except the Falange Española.

The liberal government hovered for a moment between surrender—in the form of a cabinet alliance with the right members who had not yet declared their allegiance to Generals Franco, Queipo de Llano, and Cabanellas—and resistance on the basis of the Popular Front. Prieto again argued the impracticability of a move to the right; it was plain that the right wanted power, not jobs. While the liberals hesitated the officers mutinied all over the country and right politicians withdrew discreetly from Madrid. The socialists urged the government to arm the trade union patrols; it was essential that the barracks in Madrid should not dominate the situation. But the main reserve of arms was in the Montaña barracks, where General Fanjul had gathered the reserve officers, the cadets, and the fascist civilian shock-formations. The government decided to storm the barracks with armed police, loyal planes, and the half-armed trade union patrols. After a night's fighting, the workers' militias broke in and seized the arms. The soldiers, who had spent the last part of the siege fighting with their officers, joined the militias. Meanwhile, General Mola marched towards Madrid. The militias, with little leadership and no orders, rushed out of Madrid to defend the passes. On July 23rd the C.N.T. officially placed itself beside the government of the Popular Front. The storming of the Montaña barracks was the Marne of the Spanish Civil War. With the capital now securely in government hands, the

rebels now had to accustom themselves to the idea of a long guerilla war, and to press more and more urgently for help from Germany and Italy. In Barcelona, much of the same sort of thing happened. There the militias were more largely under the control of the C.N.T. On July 23rd all the parties from the republicans to the P.O.U.M. set up an elected anti-fascist militias committee in Barcelona which assumed control of the defensive campaign, recruiting, military supplies, and propaganda.

The Spanish loyalists—liberals, right and left wing socialists, orthodox communists, dissident communists, syndicalists, anarchists, regional separatists, and Catholic democratic nationalists—were forced to mitigate their disagreements and set about defending what they had got. The war had produced the most odd alliances, and was to produce unlooked-for developments in political theory and practice. But before the loyalist kaleidoscope can be appreciated in all its richness and strangeness, it will be necessary to sketch out the international repercussions of the Franco rising.

The attitude of Germany and Italy was simple. A Popular Front government was not likely to be friendly. It might possibly prelude a more revolutionary development in Spanish politics. It was bound, diplomatically, to support the League powers. In the event of war against the Western powers, while it might remain neutral, it would not resist Anglo-French control of the Mediterranean, and might, as it had in the Great War, help to feed



and supply France. Naval control of the Mediterranean and the closure of the Suez Canal route to British trade could only be possible if a fascist-controlled government were installed in Spain. And there was also the Spanish supply of armament raw material to be considered. It would be an important gain if it were diverted to Germany and Italy. Important, too, to cut off France's supply of colonial troops from Morocco. And it was imperative that a right-wing rising should occur before France and Great Britain were sufficiently armed to risk a strong diplomatic pressure. With a pro-fascist government firmly installed in Spain, it would be easier to obtain concessions from the Western democracies without the danger of war. A few hundred aeroplanes and some thousands of trained troops were worth-while expenditure when its result would be the crippling of Anglo-French strategy. No countries in such a weak naval and military position could risk a war to avoid making big concessions. And after the concessions had been won, it would simply be a question of starving them out economically. They would see that it was worth their while, in the long run, to give up their democratic illusions and consent to be well-fed fascist clients inside the ring rather than starvelings outside it.

The attitude of France and Great Britain was more confused. France, under a Popular Front government, could not fail to see the military implications of a Franco victory. Popular sentiment was on the whole pro-government, and that of Popular Front voters strongly so. But it could not risk a war with a

better-armed Germany at the front door. Besides, it had to deal with the difficult problem of straining the national budget to meet both rearmament and extended social services. It could not very well spare aeroplanes for Spain while there were not enough for its own defence needs. Great Britain was in a similarly disadvantageous position. The electorate was pacific. War risks were out of the question. A war could only cripple the country for a final round with Germany even if Germany did not come in openly. The only sort of diplomacy possible was one which suited the dimensions of the country's air force. Besides, a "red" Spain was neither here nor there. A "red" Spain might spread its contagion to France and invite the dangerous diplomatic intervention of Herr Hitler. And France, if she ever dreamt of such a thing, must not endanger the balance of power by wasting war material to help the Spanish "reds." There were two main things to be avoided: a European war before the Western powers were ready, and an accelerated armaments race with Spain as the needy customer. It was indeed unfortunate that the Mediterranean position had deteriorated. But the only possible policy was to play for time and devise some method which would prolong the civil war until the Western powers were in a stronger position, and hope against hope that the Spaniards would patch things up between themselves and cheat the fascists of a cheap victory. The method devised by the French and English statesmen was the London Non-Intervention Committee. It accomplished all the things required of

it except its ostensible object of non-intervention. And that, to give it its due, was beyond its competence; it could not have done more than it did—and to excuse it of being a pro-Franco manœuvre is to assume a Machiavellian cunning which was alien to its originators, Blum and Eden.

The U.S.S.R. was strangely placed. It was menaced on two sides, by Germany and by Japan. Diplomatically, its natural allies were similarly menaced powers, France and Great Britain. A Franco victory would endanger the Franco-Soviet Pact, on which the East European *status quo* depended. Open support for Government Spain, though it would not risk a war so surely as French support, might alienate the British interests who would interpret the action as the resurgence of world-revolutionary aims. It was essential not to offend the democratic powers. It was essential to keep the anti-fascist forces intact. But it was perfectly clear that the defeat of the Spanish Government would only strengthen the U.S.S.R.'s potential aggressors. Whether she liked it or not, Spain must be helped. A failure to do so would not only be strategically undesirable, it would also destroy what prestige she had left in the international socialist movement. The U.S.S.R. tried to steer a course between these rival considerations. She joined the London committee for a time and did not interfere on a large scale. She sent enough arms and just enough technicians to ensure that the Spanish Government did not collapse at the outset. She bought Spanish goods she did not particularly want



to strengthen the government's economic position. She encouraged, though she did not entirely organize, the international brigade of volunteers. And she actively resisted, through the Third International, the anarchist, left-socialist, and dissident communist attempts to turn the civil war into a revolutionary war. Of course, the civil war was bound to be in some sense revolutionary. A government victory would in any case certainly mean plentiful social reforms and a modern development of industry. But a revolutionary war might not only prejudice the government's military effectiveness; it might also alienate France and Great Britain so strongly that the U.S.S.R. would find itself in the old position of international scapegoat. The result to aim at was a modernized radical social democracy, with a strong sense of order, a contented farming population—no collectives if that went against the grain—and a middle and working class devoting their energies to economic reconstruction. In practice, this meant the alliance in Spain of the communists with the liberals, the right-wing socialists, the regionalists, and the Catholic democrats against the anarchosyndicalists, the left-wing socialists, and the dissident communists. Not that there was ever an open alliance of this kind, but such a programme entailed the sort of administrative co-operation and public discussion which were more helpful to the "Fabian" than to the revolutionary forces.

Roughly speaking, the military course of the war consisted of a series of defeats for the ill-prepared government, followed by a period of defensive

consolidation. The early defeats were inevitably due to poor equipment, lack of organization, and lack of co-ordination between the administration and the improvised fighting formations of the trade unions.

In the first months of the war, the organization of defence was primarily undertaken by elected local committees of representatives from the anti-fascist parties and the unions, functioning independently of the government though in loose co-operation with it. These committees resembled the "soviets" which had arisen during the Asturias revolt, and like them, they gradually extended their powers to cover military supply and rearguard police work. The government meanwhile mobilized what resources it had. But for the first months of the war, it can be said that the defence of republican Spain was in the hands of workers' committees. These committees, however, never extended their sovereignty beyond their localities, never attempted to set up national co-ordinating councils, never, in fact, looked like assuming State power. For this they have been criticized by the theorists of the Fourth (communist opposition) International, who see in these self-imposed limitations an acknowledgment of the sovereignty of the liberal government. "The road to the proletarian dictatorship lay clearly before the proletariat," says one of them. "What was needed was to give the factory committees, the peasant committees, and the militia committees a democratic character by having them elected by all the workers in each unit (and not through parties and unions); to bring together these

delegates in village, city, regional councils which would in turn send delegates to a national congress. True, the soviet form would not of itself have solved the whole problem. A reformist majority in the central committee would decline the assumption of State power. But the workers could still find in the soviets their natural organs of struggle until the genuinely revolutionary elements in the various parties banded together to win a revolutionary majority in the congress, and establish the workers' State."

The only party in Spain which shared to any extent the ideas of Trotsky was the dissident-communist P.O.U.M. P.O.U.M. at the beginning of the war had some influence in Catalonia, but it was speedily engulfed by the anarchist C.N.T.-F.A.I. on one side and by orthodox Marxist U.G.T. on the other. At a later period in the war, when anarchist discontent with the coalition government broke out into riots in Barcelona, it was dissolved with ease by the coalitionist forces, as it was less capable of resisting attack than the strong F.A.I.-C.N.T. It had even for some time previously been restricted in its activities by government intervention.

Why did not the anarchists or the more radical socialists attempt to transform the committees into a "workers' State"? The anarchists, as we have seen, repudiated the idea of State power. They considered that if property relations fell into the hands of the workers the State would collapse of itself. Their political initiative could only take them as far as the control of factories and farms. Later,



they were to modify their ideas, but at the outset of the war their philosophy took them no farther. The socialists, on the other hand, did not repudiate the idea of State power, but would only consent to assume it in a revolutionary sense if the majority of workers had voted for it. This meant, in practice, that the socialists, while agitating for reforms within the framework of the liberal republic, would during the war not attempt to alter it in any radical fashion. The communists, even more cautious, were ready to postpone any attempt to alter the structure of the republic until the war was over.

The dual control of defence was shown by experience to be an unsuitable and wasteful method of conducting a war on a modern scale. The socialists and communists, aware that revolution was out of the question for them, decided instead to support the liberal government and take active part in administration from the centre. Accordingly, in September 1936, a cabinet of six socialists (three of them belonging to the "left" or Caballero wing), two communists, and five republican democrats was formed, with a social programme limited to Popular Front demands. The acceptance of such a limited programme of social reform at this period by the Spanish socialists deserves some explanation. It meant the postponement of the natural aspirations of the U.G.T. masses at least, and only in return for moderate reforms which were less than those already obtained in France and England. Here is the answer: "Why does the C.N.T. behave as if we were finding ourselves before a completed revolution?"

Our geographic law is not that of immense Russia. . . . And we have to take into account the attitude of the States that surround us. . . . We still hope that the estimate of Spanish events made by certain democracies will be changed, and it would be a pity, a tragedy, to compromise these possibilities by accelerating the revolution, which at present does not lead us to any positive conclusion.” (*El Socialista*. October 5th, 1936.)

Although the Caballero coalition government refused to “accelerate the revolution,” the influence of Caballero himself was used to retain where possible, and without sacrificing efficiency, some of the specifically popular changes that had arisen spontaneously in the early days. In this he had the support of both trade union organizations, and to counterbalance U.G.T.-C.N.T. suspicion of the communists and republicans (“bureaucrats” and “bourgeois” respectively) he introduced into the cabinet four C.N.T. members, including Juan Peiró—leader of the Syndicalist and less anti-political group in the C.N.T. This remarkable spectacle—a cabinet composed quite constitutionally of M.P.s belonging to large parties with an addendum of quite unconstitutionally but very democratically chosen representatives of the largest social organization in Spain—shows very clearly the political dilemma that confronted Caballero. The curious half-political, half trade union cabinet represented his attempt to compromise between the anarchist demand for a “proletarian” committee of public safety superseding the constitutional

cabinet, and the Prieto ("right" socialist) and communist demand for efficient and unified Government control of national defence and the war industries. Many of the Prieto demands—the dissolution of irresponsible police patrols, political tribunals, unauthorized "collectivization" committees, the forcible repression of terrorist gangs, and so on, met with the approval of all the anti-fascist organizations, including the anarchists and the P.O.U.M. The reorganization of internal security was a necessity recognized by all parties: the manner of it was less clear, but finally a system of people's tribunals responsible to the Ministry of Interior was established.

In autonomist Catalonia where, as we have seen, industry was more advanced and more concentrated and therefore more ripe for public control, the course of events was rather different. The Franco rising had been followed by a wave of revolutionary activity, so vast that the Catalan Generalidad (Council of Ministers) was quite unable to check it. A month or two after the rising this was the situation: the Generalidad, composed of members of the progressive liberal parties, controlled the police, education, finance, and relations with the outside world; the municipality controlled the civic life of Barcelona; the Catalan anti-fascist militias committee and its subsidiary, the supplies committee, controlled defence recruiting, public order, supplies, and the vital industries. In fact, the real power was in the hands of the committees. But the situation did not make for efficiency. Accordingly, the Generalidad



tried to widen the basis of the central government. The anarchists and the P.O.U.M. were shy of coming in at first; the anarchists because they were unwilling to give up their anti-political principles, the P.O.U.M. because they had committed themselves to a demand for a purely "workers' government." The relatively small socialist and communist groups had merged into the P.S.U.C. (Unified Socialist Party of Catalonia). Their unification was possible in Catalonia, where anarchist criticism minimized the differences between Marxist parties. And since the Communist Party was regarded by many as standing to the right of the Caballero socialists, many Catalans joined the new organization as an insurance against anarchist excesses.<sup>1</sup> The Catalan socialists, more "right-wing" than the Madrid and Valencia socialists because of the historic enmity between the C.N.T. and the U.G.T. in Barcelona, found no difficulty in merging with the Catalan communists with whose "win-the-war-first" attitude they agreed. The P.S.U.C. entered the Generalidad and was given the Councillorships of Provisioning, Communications, and Economy.

The entry of the P.S.U.C. into the Generalidad paved the way for the co-operation of the other workers' parties. In September Juan Fabregas (C.N.T.) accepted the portfolio of Economy and

<sup>1</sup> The C.A.D.C.I., the Catalan "white-collar workers'" organization, the G.E.P.C.I., the organization of petty traders and small manufacturers, a section of the separatist Estat Catalá, hitherto under Esquerra influence, and several independent unions joined either the P.S.U.C. or its union organization, the U.G.T. In the early days U.G.T. membership rose by 23,000. In nine months it had risen to about 450,000.

Andrés Nin (P.O.U.M.) that of Justice. It was now possible to rationalize the situation.

The main problem before the Generalidad was the problem of industrial organization. The main revolutionary activity of the Catalan masses during the first months of the war had been the occupation of the factories, and the setting up of committees to control production: their instincts were not political, but syndicalist. Many of the factories taken over had been abandoned; in others the employer had to be responsible to a workers' committee. "The real danger," says Frank Jellinek, *News Chronicle* and *Manchester Guardian* correspondent, "was this more or less mutualist instinct which, uncanalized, could lead to chaos. It was a thing deep-rooted in the people and any policy, however realist, which opposed it directly could only be disastrous. The instinct for mutual solidarity was confined to persons with similar interests—whether house-committees, district committees, single workshops, factories, industries, municipalities, or even whole provinces. The centralized State ran just as much counter to this instinct as any form of fascist corporativism or totalitarianism. The fundamental problem of the Civil War was to find some institution which would permit the maximum autonomy and yet gather to it all the forces necessary for the successful waging of the war." Collectivized industry in Catalonia, in fact, might have led to two unfortunate results from the Generalidad point of view: "syndicalist capitalism" or the sharing of profits among the producers, which would have retained the disadvantages of the

competitive system and which without a complementary financial system would have simply meant the dictatorship of the producer over the consumer, and the management of the factories with a peace rather than with a war-bias. Already a collectivized section of the Catalonian metal industry had produced trams instead of armoured cars.

The new Generalidad set about its work of "canalization." The militia committees, central and local, were dissolved and their powers turned over to the appropriate ministries. The *ad hoc* committees which had arisen everywhere were replaced by municipal councils composed in the same proportions as the Generalidad Council (Esquerra 3, C.N.T. 3, P.S.U.C. 2, Rabassaires, P.O.U.M., and Accio Catala (to the right of the Esquerra) 1 each). All military equipment was to be handed over to the municipal councils. In October an immense "collectivization decree" was issued, which accepted some of the facts of the situation, but provided administrative safeguards, and to carry out its orders a new organ, the Council for Economic Syndical Control, was created.

Although the collectivization decree merely represents the blue-print of the new Economic Council's intentions, and Catalan economy never became anything like so orderly, the decree does represent something very important. It was a step towards that mixture of autonomy plus efficiency which, all observers agree, combines Spanish "instinct" with Spanish needs, and which, for want of a better name, we can call syndical socialism. Particularly



interesting, too, is the fact that the chief architect of the decree was Juan Fabregas, the C.N.T. Councillor for Economy. The decree deserves special study as the C.N.T.-inspired contribution towards a transitional solution of Catalonia's problem of social organization. For the intransigent C.N.T. to inspire a "transitional solution" was a tremendous break with its purist traditions, especially as it had already established official *bon voisinage* relations with the U.G.T. For without the co-operation of the socialist U.G.T. it would never have been possible to carry through the scheme.

Roughly speaking, the scheme amounted to this: Catalan industry was divided into two categories: (1) collective enterprises managed by the workers represented in an Enterprise Council, (2) private enterprises, managed by the owner or manager with the collaboration and approval of a workers' Control Committee. All large enterprises, as well as those abandoned by their owners, could be collectivized. Smaller enterprises could apply for collectivization if the owners and three-quarters of the employees so wished. Both the liabilities and assets of the former enterprise passed to the collectivized enterprise. Former owners and managers could continue to work in their enterprises in administrative capacities at salaries not more than double those of highly skilled workers. Foreign enterprises could only be collectivized by special authorization from the Ministry of Labour, and then compensated.

The responsibility for the management of collectivized enterprises rested, as we have seen, with an

Enterprise Council, occupying the same position as the directors' board in a limited company. It was elected by the workers in general assembly for two years, half of it being renewable annually. It was responsible to the workers and to the General Industrial Councils, new creations which we will deal with later. It had to abide by the regulations of the General Industrial Councils regarding distribution of profits, margin of profits, conditions of sale, buying of raw materials, reserve funds, etc. It was also responsible for the welfare of the employees. It elected a director, not necessarily a member of the Enterprise Council. In very large enterprises, and industries connected with defence, the election had to be sanctioned by the Generalidad. Every Enterprise Council had to include a government inspector, whose business it was to see that the decree was carried out, and to act as a link between the government and the enterprise. Complaints and suggestions by the workers could be made through their own committees and were passed on to the General Industrial Councils. Members of the Enterprise Council could be dismissed for incompetence by a general assembly of the workers—adopting the functions of a shareholders' meeting—or by a General Industrial Council.

The functions of the Workers' Control Committees in private industry, obligatory, but democratically elected, were to see that labour legislation was carried out, make suggestions for improvements in production to the management, and be responsible for the scrutiny of accounts.

The General Industrial Councils were responsible for the efficiency of whole industries, and were composed of Enterprise Councils' representatives, union representatives, and technicians appointed by the Council of Economy. It was their job to draw up general plans for the industry, with reference to marketing and tariffs and production difficulties, to control prices so as to avoid as far as possible competition between industries, and to undertake vital industrial research. Their decisions were binding upon Enterprise Councils, who could only appeal to the final decision of the Councillor of Economy.

What was the position of the bondholders under this decree?

Every enterprise had to draw up a balance-sheet which was checked by Generalidad accountants. Favourable balances were registered, and the inventoried credit balance of any firm was placed to the bondholders' credit, after deductions for reserves, etc., had been decided. Dividends were to be paid in Spanish or Catalan currency.

Now this system, while it was syndical-socialist in the manner of its administration, was not by any means wholly so. In theory, it had nothing to do with Russian "collectivism." It could not be fully socialist either while the payment of dividends to passive bondholders was recognized in principle. At most, it was producers' co-operation under a planning authority responsible to a democratically constituted cabinet.

Contained in the preamble to the decree was a



recommendation for an industrial and commercial credit bank, which would have collected profits made by the collectivized industries, granted credit to those in need of capital, and helped industries, such as the luxury industries, adversely affected by the war. Such an institution would prevent the creation of two classes of workers—those employed in profitable industries, such as munition making, and those employed in semi-bankrupt industries like the manufacture of ornamental hat-trimmings. Some of the more purist anarchists, especially the members of the Anarchist Youth, wished to get over the temporary difficulty induced by the lack of imported raw materials for the luxury trades by instituting an equal and family wage. But such a solution was generally regarded as unfair to the workers in the heavy industries working overtime to finish government contracts.

But the setting up of a bank to furnish credit for Catalan industry was by no means an easy business. The Madrid government, influenced by centralist considerations, was suspicious of any specifically Catalan financial scheme and afraid that it might result in the bottling up of gold and silver reserves which should properly contribute to the persecution of the war as a whole. The Esquerra Councillor for Finance, José Tarradellas, was given wide powers to deal with the financial situation. An official discount bank was created, and this was quite successful.

Suspicion of Catalan financial methods was only one of the causes of friction between Madrid and Barcelona. In Cerdanya, the northern province of

Catalonia, anarchist committees had set up little communes and in the first months had instituted a system of barter, and were unwilling to let themselves be dissolved. They were suspected of holding up government supplies. The central government, irritated by their intransigence, decided to step in. Meanwhile, tension in Barcelona arose. The P.O.U.M. had been dropped from the government and settled down to a systematic opposition. The purist elements in F.A.I.-C.N.T. disapproved of its collaboration in many of the Generalidad's efficiency measures—such as the depoliticizing of the police—and signalized them as steps designed to check the social revolution, which they were to some extent. News that government troops were on their way to break up the Cerdanya committees made the situation worse. Madrid reported that the great Barcelona telephone exchange, controlled by anarchist operatives, had tapped government calls. The Generalidad sent police to enquire, perhaps to take over. This, together with news of the government expedition to Cerdanya, together with the fact that the police chief was a known P.S.U.C. sympathizer, brought the Friends of Durruti, sections of the Anarchist Youth, and P.O.U.M. out into the streets. The P.O.U.M. were anxious to increase their influence among the anarchists and were bitterly hostile to the rival Marxist party, the P.S.U.C., whom they regarded as an essentially unrevolutionary party. The Friends of Durruti were extreme anarchists pledged to defiance of government, whether progressive or reactionary. A

small group of Fourth International communists joined them, anxious to use the Friends of Durruti as a means of establishing a revolutionary commune in Barcelona. They had interpreted the situation in terms of 1871, equating Franco's troops with the Prussians and the coalition governments with the Versailles parliament. After a few days' fighting in the streets and many casualties the rising collapsed. The moderate C.N.T. leaders had done their best to pacify their extreme following. They remained in the confidence of the Generalidad, but the extreme anarchists in Cerdanya were rounded up, P.O.U.M. members were expelled from positions of trust, some were arrested and executed, Nin amongst them, and their organization rendered practically powerless by police restrictions. The central government took over the management of public order.

The defeat of the rising was a moral victory for the communists and the P.S.U.C. Both parties had been constantly agitating for greater unification on the government side, greater co-operation between the various fronts, and greater emphasis on the military side of the struggle. There was no doubt that the Barcelona rising had been an important factor contributing to the defeat of the Basque democrats. They advised vigorous self-denial as far as party aims were concerned until the war was over. No doubt their insistence on self-denial was partly motivated by a desire to increase their influence at the expense of the anarchists, and fall in with the soft-pedalling demanded by Russian



foreign policy. Still, their attitude was a popular one, especially among the government's middle-class supporters, who were far more anxious for the defeat of Franco than for risky social experiments.

Caballero was worried by the support gained for the communist point of view. It had been put forward by the youth groups of his own party, by the Asturian U.G.T. and to some extent by the Prieto wing of the Socialist Party. To accept the communist and Prietist suggestions would be to antagonize large sections of the U.G.T. and C.N.T., who naturally regarded politics from a trade union point of view, and were suspicious of the bureaucratic flavour of the communist-Prietist demands. The C.N.T. and the U.G.T. though hardly homogeneous bodies, were still the largest forces, numerically, in the country. The forces on the communist side, though smaller, were undoubtedly united and more capable of administrative responsibility. Caballero felt himself bound to choose between government through the political parties, that is, political democracy, or government through the trade unions, that is, syndicalist democracy. He chose the latter, and attempted to form a cabinet composed largely of C.N.T. and U.G.T. members. It was an interesting idea. But there were administrative objections to it. For if trade union government is to remain democratic, trade union membership must be made universal. And if trade union membership is made universal it becomes diluted and unintelligent. Trade union government would

have meant union management of industry, and in time of war it is very doubtful whether that method can compete with nationalization as far as efficiency is concerned. Syndicalists, as well as dissident communists, would retort with the argument that in civil war example is more important than efficiency. They would argue that the possessive instinct is stronger than the political instinct, and that the spectacle of workers running their own factories for their own profit and the community's would demoralize the rank and file of Franco's armies far more potently than ten crack divisions. This is an old argument in socialist circles, and it is certainly supported by impressive historical precedents. But there are historical precedents on the other side also and, anyway, it is never safe to argue from historical precedents. The situation in Spain was not entirely a civil war on two-class lines. It resembled the Russian civil war in the fact of foreign intervention, in the fact that it concerned a vital agrarian question, and in the fact that the *mise en scène* was not a highly developed industrial country. The class-composition of the government side was mixed, however. And the world-setting of the civil war was different. The government side, moreover, was in retreat before better-equipped forces, and in Spain it could not retreat indefinitely. Had the war remained a guerilla war, the syndicalist argument would have been more to the point. But foreign intervention had turned the war into a modern mechanized war which required efficient and co-ordinated management. Military pressure tends

to have a centralizing effect. It had in Russia, and it has in China, and not because of historical self-consciousness, but for practical reasons.

Caballero's attempt failed and the C.N.T. withdrew from the government. It was replaced by a government under Prieto's influence and with a new Premier, Dr. Juan Negrin, a friend of Prieto's but representing a more central position in the Socialist Party—an Attlee, as it were, to Caballero's Cripps and Prieto's Citrine. It represented a much more moderate and conciliatory tendency than the previous cabinet. This was its composition:

Negrin .. ..	Premier, Economy and Finance. A socialist.
Prieto .. ..	Defence. A socialist.
Giral .. ..	Foreign Affairs. An Azaña liberal. He was helped by the League delegate, Alvarez del Vayo, a socialist.
Irujo .. ..	Justice. A Basque nationalist (Catholic democrat).
Hernandez ..	Education. A communist.
Uribe .. ..	Agriculture. A communist.
Aiguadé ..	Labour. A Catalan liberal.
Zugazagoitia ..	Interior. A socialist.
de los Rios ..	Public Works and Communica- tions. A right-wing liberal.

The new cabinet representing as it did the parties who had signed the Popular Front pact—the Basque excepted—represented a return to full political democracy. A little later the same movement took



place in Catalonia where Companys took advantage of C.N.T. disagreement over the inclusion of an Accio Catala (right-wing separatist) member in the cabinet, to form a new cabinet composed of Esquerra, P.S.U.C., Ribaissares, and Accio Catala members, excluding the C.N.T.

Once Caballero and the syndicalist tendencies he represented were out of the cabinet, several developments took place. The new cabinet concentrated on the needs of the war. Industrial collectivization was stopped and in some cases replaced by nationalization or by reversion to private control. Agricultural collectivization was similarly halted; and the smaller farmers were assured of their independent position. All munition factories were brought under strict government control. Restrictions on religious worship were gradually removed. The police was reconstituted on non-party lines. Thousands of suspect conservatives were released from prison. Professional lawyers streamed back into the law courts. Newspapers were made to conform to the regulations of a military censorship. The army was brought under unified control, and while the "political" officers retained their position, professional officers were turned out by the government military schools to take over new commands in the growing army, and conventional military discipline was restored.

Without a doubt, what the Negrin government lacked in popularity among the trade unions, it made up for in efficiency. Government Spain now presented a rather different picture: the war for

social liberation had been succeeded by a war of national independence. To symbolize this new orientation of government policy, the Cortes was summoned, and the "national" rather than "proletarian" aspect of the government was emphasized by the presence of two conservative republican leaders, Miguel Maura and Portela Valladares. But the new national and constitutional policy of the government was not without a more sinister side. Dissident groups, such as the P.O.U.M. and the Friends of Durruti, received short shift at the hands of the new police. That their activities should be curtailed was understandable, probably warrantable. But the sternness of the measures taken against them smacked rather of Moscow heresy-hunts. In the countryside, the check on collectivization was not altogether well received. While it was welcomed by many peasant owners and small proprietors, a large number of landless peasants organized in the C.N.T. and U.G.T. agricultural unions felt that they had been betrayed. It is not much consolation to a hungry labourer to be told that he must wait until the war is over before he can be guaranteed a livelihood. The small proprietors and the non-anarchist peasants were championed by the Communist Party which, although it did not go as far as recommending a distributivist land policy, was anxious to ensure the food supply by making allowances for peasant land hunger. But as yet no long-term solution of the Spanish agrarian problem had been attempted. The division of the estates of Franco landowners, and the efforts of

the trade unions and the government to provide the peasantry with cheap fertilizers and implements improved their situation. Agricultural education schemes and electrification schemes then under weigh would have helped them in the long run. But the manner of the solution of the problem had to wait until the war was over and in event of a government victory would have depended on whether the elements in favour of political democracy or those in favour of syndicalist democracy were predominant on the government side. At all events a "dictatorship of the proletariat" on the Russian model was very unlikely to result, partly because the Spanish Communist Party had modified its aims, and partly because of the "autonomous" instincts and traditions of the Spanish working class. If the collectivization solution had been adopted, it was far more likely to have been on a more or less syndicalist than on a more or less communist basis.

The F.A.I. was impressed by the swing back to political democracy, and by its own failure to control the situation. In July 1937 it decided to make radical changes in the character of its organization. The F.A.I., hitherto a secret organization, decided to become a legally registered one. Its members, although still barred from parliamentary politics, could take posts in public institutions. It was no longer a co-opted body, but was open to any manual or intellectual worker who agreed with its general principles. These changes represented a desire to make itself as efficient an instrument as the Communist Party, but without sacrificing its



libertarian principles to centralized control. It represented, too, the desire to show itself competent at those administrative tasks at which communists excelled.

The outcome of the Spanish civil war was, at the time of writing, still uncertain. But in the course of it practically every problem discussed by socialists has arisen. It will be convenient to list some of them:

The collectivization of factories.

The democratization of the army and police.

The relations between military discipline and political freedom.

Federal decentralization.

Cultural autonomy.

Free education.

State services of all kinds.

Relations between the management and trade unions.

The function of trade unions in a social-democratic State.

Syndicalist democracy.

Methods of nationalization.

The breaking up of big estates.

Land collectivization.

The position of small retailers.

Censorship.

The disestablishment of the Church.

The effects of the European struggle between fascism and democracy on socialist policy.

None of these questions can be regarded as finally settled in Spain, as those which appear to be settled

are merely unnaturally stabilized by the restrictions imposed by the civil war. But even the final victory of Franco will not "solve" some of these questions, as they are Spanish as well as international questions.

### CHIEF SPANISH GOVERNMENT PARTIES AND SUPPORTING GROUPS

§ Izquierda Republicana		Azaña's and Giral's party. Liberal, secularist.
§ Esquerra	.. ..	Companys' party. Progressive liberal, autonomist.
§ Basque Nationalists	..	Conservative democrat. Strongly catholic-autonomist.
§ Union Republicana	..	Right wing liberal, de los Rios' and Barrio's party.
§ Accio Catala	.. ..	Right wing liberal, Catalan separatist.
† Socialist Party	.. ..	The party of Caballero, Negrin, and Prieto, social-democrat, trade unionist, Second International.
‡ Communist Party	..	Marxist, radical social-democrat. Third International.
‡ P.S.U.C.	.. ..	Fusion of Catalan socialist and communist parties. Marxist, Third International.

† Predominantly working-class parties or groups.

‡ Mixed working-class, peasant-owner, or lower middle class.

§ Middle class and lower middle class.

*† P.O.U.M.	..	..	Dissident communist, revolutionary. Anti-Third International.
† Syndicalist Party	..	..	Breakaway from F.A.I.-C.N.T., Collectivist. Peiró's party.
§ Estat Catalá	..	..	Catalan separatist, radical liberal.
† Rabassaires	..	..	Catalan tenant-farmers' league. Liberal.
† F.A.I.	..	..	Anarchosyndicalist, against co-operation in cabinet government.
*† Friends of Durruti	..	..	Extreme anarchist and revolutionary, intended to supersede F.A.I.
† U.G.T.	..	..	Trade union organization chiefly under Caballero's influence.
† C.N.T.	..	..	Anarchosyndicalist trade union organization, chiefly under F.A.I. influence, collectivist.
§ C.A.D.C.I.	..	..	Catalan "white collar workers'" organization, under U.G.T. and Esquerra influence.
§ G.E.P.C.I.	..	..	Small traders' and manufacturers' union in Catalonia.

\* After May, 1937, in opposition to the Government.

† Predominantly working-class parties or groups.

§ Middle class and lower middle class.



## CHAPTER X

### SOME OTHER SOCIALIST PATTERNS

**T**HIS short résumé of socialist history has only dealt in detail with the socialist movement in England, France, Germany, Spain, and Russia, and has only referred to the movement in other countries, notably in Italy, Hungary, Bulgaria, and the United States of America when events there have illustrated some important principle or have affected the course of events in other countries. But the reader is, nevertheless, not to suppose that important contributions to socialist theory have not been made by other countries.

In European countries with a long native democratic tradition, a form of democratic socialism based on revisionist principles has been paramount. In Sweden, for instance, proportional representation had moulded the tactics of the Socialist Party, which has accepted the principle of coalition government with liberal groups. Here, as in Denmark, Holland, and Belgium, the socialist movement's main pre-occupation is to maintain the standard of life of the working classes and to influence capitalist development in the directions most promising to eventual nationalization. In Denmark, Belgium, and Holland

in particular, the socialist movement is supported by strong and successful co-operative practice, which helps to extend working-class and peasant purchasing power without making serious inroads on competitive enterprise. In all these "model democracies" the socialist parties have only been able to maintain themselves in power by permission of the middle or peasant classes and consequently their main efforts are directed towards the formulation of gradualist policies which will not affect these classes adversely. Their main problems have been financial, their difficulty how to offset industrial and agricultural depression by measures which do not entail a reduction in the standard of living, and which, at the same time, do not scare the middle-class investors. There exists a revolutionary communist minority in all of these countries, but while the present economic system in Great Britain, France, and the U.S.A. remains relatively stable, it is exceedingly unlikely that its influence will increase. For the northern democracies are so closely economically linked with the great democracies, that their pursuance of an integral socialist policy depends very largely on the course of events elsewhere. So far their main achievements have lain in Fabian fields: in the organization of national and municipal services, housing policy, and in the quite successful expansionist financial measures which have been passed to deal with unemployment.

In Australia and New Zealand, the same pattern is visible. In Australia the labour movement has been logical enough to disown Marxism, orthodox

or revisionist, entirely. The Australian Labour Party, chiefly the creation of W. M. Hughes, simply sets out to obtain the highest possible standard of life for the worker within the capitalist structure, and to this end will advocate any measure which will protect the Australian worker from foreign competition. Its wages policy demands that every worker "shall be able to marry and rear a family under decent conditions," and it has obtained, by industrial pressure, the recognition, embodied in law, of the basic wage. It would have been impossible to have obtained recognition for this modern equivalent for the mediæval theory of the "just price" in any country which possessed a large "reserve" of labour. It will only remain the fundamental policy of the Australian Labour Party as long as the Commonwealth can sell its wool profitably. New Zealand's labour policy was influenced by a group of intelligent socialists who rescued it from an over-narrow trade union interpretation. The New Zealand labour movement is also a standard of life movement, but it maintains "decent conditions" not only by the legal sanctification of the basic wage, but by the sounder expedient of national and municipal health and housing services. Its object is social security, and it has been successfully employing methods similar to those of the Roosevelt administration to obtain it. It is dependent on the goodwill of the international investor for many of its schemes and is always liable to financial sabotage. That is its limiting factor. The Labour Party has accepted the situation realistically and



has concentrated its theoretical energies on the close study of public finance and monetary policy.

A more complicated pattern is observable in what we will call semi-colonial countries, that is to say, countries whose political administration is in native hands, but whose natural resources are exploited by foreign companies. The South American and Caribbean republics are, with the possible exceptions of Uruguay and Ecuador, in this category. Before the war, British and German traders had captured the trade of the South American republics. In 1914 the flow of goods and investments was shut off from Europe, so the South American countries turned to the north. The U.S.A. became the chief buyer of Bolivian tin, Chilean nitrates, Brazilian coffee, Peruvian copper, and the agricultural produce of the southern ranchers. Large American firms and private banking houses controlled the major part of economic life. It followed that administrations could only ensure their political stability by following the suggestions of the predominant American capitalist groups. The South American States became inclined to specialize in the product which sold best in the United States and a very lop-sided economy, dependent on the United States for manufactured goods and modern services, resulted. The world crisis of 1929 brought economic ruin. The Americans recalled their short-term loans, and cut down imports, and raw materials could only be sold at a loss.

The political repercussions were violent, and

movements representing communistic and fascist trends appeared. Capitalism had broken down badly and people were ready for radical solutions. The early radicalism of South America had represented a revolt against the hard discipline of industry. The libertarian ideas of Spanish anarcho-syndicalism, propagated by the Catalan Pellicer Parairo, had been readily welcomed. The local situation reflected some of the worst aspects of Spanish economy: a semi-feudal landlord class exploiting the cheap labour of the half-caste and Indian peasants, politically minded armies, a corrupt ecclesiastical hierarchy, a determined opposition to trade union organization on the part of native and concessionaire industrialists, a parody of democracy, vitiated by foreign influence, illiteracy, and the corruption of the ruling families, who prided themselves on their freedom from Indian blood. Except in Uruguay, and, to a certain extent, in Chile, where José Salas' agitation was successful, social-democracy made very little headway. Uruguay had resisted the more pernicious forms of commercial colonization, and had been able to introduce modern reforms under a socialist administration. But in the other countries, which lacked a respectable liberal tradition, democracy did not seem worth defending. In Peru, Haya de la Torre's A.P.R.A., a union of workers and students, preached a sort of national communism. In the Argentine a fascistic military dictatorship proscribed both the middle-class radical party and the anarchist F.O.R.A. In all of the States an anti-concessionaire

attitude grew up, which could be bent in either a fascistic or radical direction.

Anti-clericalism was another confusing issue, which coloured the whole course of the Mexican revolution. Mexico had risen in revolt against Spain in the nineteenth century, as much against the wealthy foreign prelates as against the Spanish nobility. However, the dictator Porfirio Diaz, who ruled Mexico between 1877 and 1910, had pursued a policy of attracting foreign capital so systematically that about two-thirds of the Mexican people became *peons* tied by debt to their landlord employers. In 1922 95 per cent. of the capital invested in Mexican oil was held by Americans and Englishmen. And the Church, itself a largely foreign concern, still retained a privileged position and used it to curb any reforming movements. The period between 1910 and the present has seen a succession of civil wars between rival political factions, but beneath these bloody struggles between adventurers lies a strong tendency towards Mexican nationalism on a very radical basis, strongly influenced by Morones' Confederation of Labour. The present administration has made the programme of the Mexican revolution explicit: the nationalization of foreign-owned oil concessions, the freeing of the *peon*. It is the same sort of revolution as the Chinese revolution, and like it contains a national-communist strain, at present subordinated to a movement for national liberation. And by nationalist communist we mean here the sort of communism which flourishes in politically backward agricultural countries, and



which is concerned with questions which were settled long ago in advanced capitalist countries. And, indeed, the experience of Russia is far more relevant to the situation in Mexico and China than the experience of European social-democracy. For it is idle to suggest that the ills of these countries can be cured by democratic discussion when both the organs of democracy and its economic basis still have to be created. An embryo democracy exists in Mexico: it has a democratic constitution, it allows political minorities to exist within limits, on many social questions its attitude is "advanced," but while its independence is threatened by undemocratic groups and while its internal economy is archaic, Mexican democracy will have recourse to more primitive methods.

Marxist socialism—formulated as it was when the European middle classes were fighting for liberal political and economic principles in alliance with the working classes, when nationalism implied an assertion of economic independence from the semi-feudal empires—provides a more vivid commentary on society in these types of countries than it does in Western Europe. Historical analogies are dangerous things: the situations are only superficially similar. But the political tactics of the radical elements in those backward countries which have experienced national revolutions approximate closely to the tactics of the radicals of 1848 just because of this superficial resemblance in the disposition of political forces. And, conversely, these superficial

resemblances provide a point of departure for the propagation of Marxist theory.

The influence of "fundamentalist" or Marxist-Leninist theory has been very profound in China.

Why was China more open to communist influence than other Asiatic semi-colonial countries? In Turkey and Japan the tradition of national superiority over "lesser" nations was too strong to allow of the radicalization of their respective nationalist movements. In India, the caste-system is a formidable barrier to communism as well as to democracy. In China the religious and historical barriers against communist ideology are infinitely weaker.

The revolutionary movement in China was, of course, inspired by the intelligentsia. We say "of course" because no other class interested in Western reforms existed or could have existed. The first reformers attempted to carry out their ideas with the help of the Manchu emperors. Their zeal provoked a reaction which culminated in the "Boxer" movement and provoked a disastrous war with the West. After the "Boxer" war, China became a commercial colony of the Western Powers and Japan. After this period, the Westernized reformers, previously amenable to western diplomacy, became both nationalist and anti-Manchu. It was clear that co-operation with the Manchus was disastrous and with the Westerners humiliating. This new type of Chinese nationalism was given its best expression by Sun-Yat-Sen, the founder of the Kuomintang, or People's Party.

The teachings of Sun-Yat-Sen, embodied in his

Three Principles—Nationalism, Democracy, and Social Justice—represent an attempt to combine Western progress with Chinese culture. Sun-Yat-Sen had studied in America and had learnt to admire its democratic institutions. But at the same time he wished to assert the traditional Chinese values against the commercial values of the treaty-port populations. Western industrial progress without capitalism and class-war, democracy without parliaments, materialism plus spirituality—all these apparent contradictions represented a genuine and sympathetic confusion in the minds of the early Kuomintang leaders. In 1911 Sun-Yat-Sen finally succeeded in overthrowing the Manchu dynasty. But China was unprepared for a liberal republic, and during the period which followed the fall of the Empire the best organized forces in the country, those of the provincial generals, created a very lucrative chaos.

Chaos brought a reaction. In 1919 the Peking students started to boycott Japanese goods. The national resistance to Japanese influence in North China found a new ally in the not inconsiderable proletariat of Shanghai. The natural allies of the students would have been the trading classes, but these had compromised themselves either with the foreigners or the generals. The Peking intellectuals who formed the nucleus of the Chinese Communist Party saw in communism the logical extension of their early nationalism, now directed not only against the foreigner but the Chinese "traitor." Sun-Yat-Sen in Canton saw the value of the



northern movement, and in 1923 got into touch with the communists. The Kuomintang movement was reorganized with help from the Comintern and launched a programme which contained pledges both to workers and peasants. The union between nationalists and communists brought a real mass movement into being which culminated in an anti-British general strike in Hong Kong.

The middle-class supporters of the Kuomintang now took fright at their own handiwork. Chiang-Kai-Shek executed a coup against the communist and working-class section of the Kuomintang in 1926 and took charge of the Canton administration. At this point the Chinese communists, could, if they had chosen, have risen against Chiang in alliance with the left wing of the Kuomintang with good prospects of success. But the Comintern, influenced by Russian foreign policy considerations, advised the Chinese communists to accept a compromise which imposed severe limitations on their social programme. In spite of the compromise support for the left increased. A tremendously confused situation ensued, in which the left was more or less besieged in Hankow and Shanghai, disarmed, and finally butchered.

The remnants of the communist parties now found themselves at open war with the Kuomintang and were at liberty to make revolutionary propaganda. But their new freedom did not amount to much without arms. Their partisans were rounded up and killed, and their influence in the coastal towns dwindled away to nothing. Their policy of

compromise had not been logical. They had agreed to remain within the Kuomintang in order to further Russian policy, without considering the probability that Chiang was beginning to be able to secure British support against Japan. They had been admitted when a Russian alliance had been useful, and were scrapped when it could be replaced.

The communist labour movement was finished, but it was replaced by something more stable. In Kiangsi, a peasant "soviet" was created by the retreating communists. It was not a "soviet" in the Russian sense, but a peasant movement which had been organized, after it had come into existence, by communist intellectuals. Other soviets sprang up in the provinces of Kiangsi, Honan, Szechuen, and Shensi. During the civil wars peasant destitution had increased enormously, and armies of peasant bandits had come into being. These bandit armies retired into mountain fortresses, and with settlement, their character changed. Little is known of the organization of these soviets, but it appears that at first there was a period in which Chinese *kulaks* were squeezed, followed by a period of toleration and disciplined administration. At first the communist leaders of the peasant armies were loth to lose all contact with the towns and made unsuccessful sorties from the mountains. The sorties were answered by large-scale military operations, and gradually the Kiangsi territory and the smaller districts were conquered by Chiang. The peasant armies were forced, in 1934, to make a tremendous forced march

and finally set up their base in Shensi. They were now apparently finally estranged from the rest of China and it appeared a matter of months before they were driven out of their last outpost. But events in Germany and Japan saved them from destruction.

The victory of Hitler in Germany had given rise to a new defensive policy inside the Comintern, and, translated into Chinese terms, that meant an alliance of all the anti-Japanese forces in China. At the same time the war party had gained control in Japan and a war with China was close. A direct approach to Chiang by the communists would have been fruitless: the anti-soviet drive was still on. Instead they approached Marshal Chang Hsue-Liang, a powerful anti-Japanese general in the north, and agreed to drop their revolutionary agrarian policy in return for his support for a campaign against Japanese economic penetration. When Chiang Kai-Shek went north to discuss a new move against the soviets with his general, he found himself a prisoner, and forced to listen to Chang Hsue-Liang's arguments in favour of an alliance with the communists. Chiang foresaw a possible civil war in China if he persisted in his hostility to the communists and the radical nationalists, and gave in.

A few months later, when war between Japan and China broke out, the soviets were abolished by the communists themselves, the soviet territory became a "special area" within the Chinese republic, and the harried peasant armies emerged as the Eighth



Route Army under orders from Nanking. Communists again became a major force in Chinese politics, but no longer marched under the red flag of agrarian revolution, but under the blue flag of Kuomintang nationalism. Eighteen forty-eight again—but an 1848 on the defensive.

## CHAPTER XI

### THE CRISIS IN SOCIALISM

1919-39

**W**E have traced in a little detail the aftermath of the Great War in Germany, France, Russia, Italy, Austria, Hungary, and Bulgaria. We have seen how, in all of these countries save perhaps Russia, the working-class movement was unsuccessful, and how, in Russia, an authoritarian State socialism came into power.

The Second International parties maintained, on the whole, their old position as constitutional parties within democratic States, whose fundamental institutions had remained unchanged and capitalistic. In some countries, particularly in those which had remained neutral during the war and had only suffered from its secondary effects, socialist governments or socialist-liberal cabinets were returned or formed and worked out for themselves all the implications of a "gradualist" programme. Their comparative success in Sweden and Denmark, and lately in New Zealand, has always been an encouragement to English socialists, who have rather similar problems of method to consider.

In the five years which followed the war in England a strong middle-class government set about restoring at top speed the pre-war competitive system which had been partially suspended by war nationalization. The Labour Party suffered under the general disapproval which was the portion of all critics of the management of the war and of the justice of the ensuing peace. The government's Russian adventure, however, increased its influence, hitherto limited to traditionally radical industrial areas, and in the elections of 1922 helped to secure 142 seats.

The Labour Party now became a "great party." Its previous tactics had approximated to those of the old Irish party. It advertised social injustices in Parliament, attempted to cajole the Liberal Party into passing progressive legislation, and made a considerable noise considering its size. It had not declared itself as a socialist party. In 1918, in the official declaration of policy published by the party and mainly drawn up by Sidney Webb, it definitely committed itself to socialism, without, however, once using the word. In 1922 the House of Commons heard the second socialist resolution (the first had been moved by Keir Hardie in 1901) ever to be moved. "In view of the failure of the capitalist system adequately to utilize and organize natural resources and productive power, or to provide the necessary standard of life for vast numbers of the population, and believing that the cause of this failure lies in the private ownership and control of the means of production and distribution, this house declares that legislative effort should be



directed to the gradual supersession of the capitalist system by an industrial and social order based on the public ownership and democratic control of the instruments of production and distribution."

The organization of the party had been changed to fit it for its new rôle of His Majesty's Opposition. Up to 1918 it had been a federal organization of affiliated trade unions, trades councils and socialist societies. A few local Labour Parties, which were similarly constituted on a federal basis, had admitted individual members, but in effect the I.L.P., a definitely socialist organization, was the individual members' section of the party. Now local Labour Parties were established in almost every area where they had not existed before, and these catered for individual members who were not trade unionists, but who accepted the gradualist socialist programme evolved by Sidney Webb. The Labour Party now declared itself the party of "the workers by hand and brain." The I.L.P. had to reconsider its function. It was no longer the policy-forming part of the Labour Party. One section of it threw in its lot with the newly-formed Communist Party. Another, MacDonald at its head, would do nothing to embarrass the moderate policy of the new Labour Party. A third, which eventually got its way, held that the I.L.P. must become the left wing of the Labour Party, in critical alliance with it. It retained its position until after 1931, when it seceded to form a small party with syndicalist leanings inherited from the wartime revolutionary movement of the Clydeside trade unionists.

The attitude of the I.L.P. is perhaps not very important in itself, but it helps to demonstrate that the new Labour Party was not essentially different from the parliamentary group which had worked in virtual alliance with the progressive Liberals between 1905 and 1914. The only difference was that the break-up of the Liberal Party had given it the chance to make a bid for office. Its aims were now explicitly socialist, but in practice it remained a party of social reform.

The reaction from post-war jingoism which had brought the radical socialists into power in France resulted in the formation of a Labour Government in 1924. The government had no majority behind it; it depended for support on a divided Liberal Party. It was only in office a few months when a cleverly contrived "Red bogey" campaign deceived the Liberal Party into turning it out. It was a fatal course of action for the Liberal Party—for while the Labour Party survived the general election, the Liberal Party was engulfed by the Conservative reaction it had helped to provoke. The Labour Party settled down optimistically to win to itself all the vacillating elements of the left. It was returned again in 1929 but was still dependent on the support of the Liberal rump.

The 1929 government continued its moderate policy. Typical of the new government's attempted legislation was its proposal to form a London Passenger Transport Board. But its moderation could not win it the "business confidence" which had been profoundly shaken by the world crisis and

which still was frightened by memories of the General Strike. The crisis raised up enormous economic problems which a minority government under the wavering leadership of Ramsay MacDonald was ill-fated to face. At the same time a grumbling discontent with the party leadership had grown inside the movement and even within the cabinet. When the government was dissolved at the hands of its own leader, there was no great surprise. The paucity of MacDonald's following in 1931 showed very clearly that his policy was not the policy of the Labour Party as a whole.

It was strange that it retained the old Fabian theses unmodified, as the so-called "General Strike" of 1926 had shown that the large strata of the well-to-do population still regarded the working classes as the "lower orders," that sentiment in favour of social reform was much weaker than was supposed, and that a middle-class government was likely to regard any large-scale industrial movement as a declaration of civil war.

The crisis in the coal industry had produced a strong and well-reasoned demand for nationalization in the miners' unions. A Royal Commission had all but declared itself in favour of the miners' plans. A threatened strike produced yet another Royal Commission, and while it was deliberating the government prepared for the contingency of a general stoppage. The new commission's report was rejected by the unions and by the owners likewise. A new general strike, the mobilization of an "industrial alliance," loomed on the horizon, in order



to defend the *status quo* in the mining industry. A printers' strike on the *Daily Mail* gave the government its signal. A million workers were locked out and negotiations with the trade unions were broken off. The general council of the trade unions declared a partial general strike in answer to the lock-out.<sup>1</sup> The army was called out, special constables were enrolled, and the government published its own propagandist organ, the *British Gazette*. The trade unions were amazed; they had thought in terms of a few days' strike to demonstrate solidarity with the miners' unions, and they found the strike enlarged into "an attack upon constitutional government." After nine days, a basis for negotiation was found, and all the strikers except the miners returned to work. The miners held out for six months until they were starved into surrender. In 1927 a Trade Disputes and Trade Unions Act declared general and sympathetic strikes illegal, and curtailed other trade union activities—a curious piece of *post hoc* legislation.

There was no doubt that the working population was in a militant frame of mind. It was prepared to go farther than the leaders, exactly where and exactly how was not clear. The "class" attitude of the government increased their militancy and the authority of the radical leaders, A. J. Cook and Arthur Horner. The readiness to negotiate on the part of the majority of the leaders was regarded

<sup>1</sup> The author has tried to collect contemporary impressions of the strike, and has no doubt that many middle-class people, not well versed in labour matters, were really frightened. What impressed them most was the absence of daily papers.

as a betrayal by a large minority, which was even ready to transfer its political allegiance to the small Communist Party. It took the trade unions and the Labour Party three years to weed out the "reds" from the labour ranks.

The leaders' "betrayal" was in fact no betrayal at all. It arose, as we have already pointed out, out of the traditions of the movement, which finds itself completely at a loss in a situation which confuses economic with political issues. But it was strange that the political part of the Labour movement had to wait until the advent of national socialism before realizing that an economic crisis might subject the whole principle of the freedom of working-class action to attack.

The purified Labour Party now turned more resolutely to the study of the application of socialist principles to contemporary economic organization. It turned to the left, but not towards communism. The weakness of British communism was in marked contrast to the continent, a weakness which can be explained by the relative stability of the British economic system after the war, and the ignorance of Marxism in the British Labour movement. For, as we have seen, its ideas were a development of the Victorian liberalism of John Stuart Mill, patched here and there by Owen, and given cohesion by the middle-class Fabian Society. But it had become evident by 1931 that gradualist parliamentary socialism had not made any marked advances. Such achievements as it had made had been in the field of liberal reform. But even in this field the

movement was faced with the difficulty of reconciling liberal reform and the redistribution of the national income with the stability of a shaken capitalist system. Demands for pensions, public works, and insurance benefits were becoming difficult to meet without diminishing those savings which must be left to the capitalist investor if the system is to function. Socialists began to ask themselves whether the taxable capacity of the rich had not been almost reached, whether social reforms and high wages did not handicap a country in competition with others for the same market. Sure enough these questions had been asked before and answered by the temporary elasticity of the capitalist system. But now that it was facing a slump, and creating enormous unemployment, the questions became vitally urgent, because they involved a definite choice between two economic systems.

There still remained the possibility of putting capitalism on its feet by positive action along international lines. The possibility of re-creating prosperity by international socialist action was remote, as America was anti-socialist, Italy fascist, and in France middle-class radicalism was thoroughly obstructive—so obstructive, in fact, that its hostility to German regeneration was one of the factors which gelded German social-democracy, for France was still the leading military power in Europe. In 1932, to be sure, the Allies cancelled reparations. But at the same time Great Britain pursued a policy of Empire consolidation, and tariffs, embargoes, quotas, and exchange restrictions created a vicious circle



from which the less stable powers could not possibly escape. The World Economic Conference was a fiasco. The capitalists themselves were divided in their opinions between advocacy of monetary reflation and a return to *laissez-faire*. Just enough was done, however, to rescue capitalism in most countries, but it emerged from its ordeal with a permanent limp.

Capitalism might continue to exist, but it could no longer prosper. Economic nationalism, vast debts, and political insecurity had made foreign lending—the linch-pin of an expanding economic system—out of the question. The expansion of the home market offered a solution, but as it could only be expanded by raising wages, which would in turn cripple export industries, the situation seemed to have reached an impasse. As an alternative, the socialist solution began to draw towards it ever-increasing numbers of supporters.

Such was the situation when the Weimar Republic fell in 1933, and though its fall did not have immediate economic repercussions, the political implications of it were quickly grasped. The most strongly organized trade union movement in Continental Europe had capitulated without resistance. In Great Britain and France, the socialists, instead of thinking in terms of “Socialism in our Time,” realized that parliamentary democracy needed defending. It was not possible to see the full implications of the Nazi victory at that date. Some communists even welcomed it as a prelude to revolution. But when the international intentions of the Nazi

movement became clear, the communists changed their tune. In France, a fascist coup, sponsored by some of those "national" forces which secured control of the government after the war, was forestalled by the alert French workers, who rallied to the support of the radical government. In England, although internal fascism was not a menace, the socialists reconsidered their attitude in the light of the new turn of foreign politics. The Comintern, anxious to secure Russian territorial integrity before German and Japanese aggression, threw all its energies into the preservation of the European *status quo*.

We have seen how, in France, the balance between industry and agriculture precluded the socialists from making any big advances towards socialism, and how, in practice, they differed little from the radical left. The growth of German military power and the activity of anti-democratic groups within the country drew the parties of the left closer together. At the same time, the French communists, who had created a genuine working-class party based on the workers in the big industries, had been drawn into industrial co-operation with the socialists during the slump period. The new turn in Comintern policy gave this co-operation a political direction. The outcome of these movements was the "Front Populaire," and electoral alliance of radicals, socialists, and communists, which culminated in a ministry under the socialist leadership of Leon Blum. The sequel of the Front Populaire victory was an astonishing working-class mass movement for

measures of radical social reform. For a time the French capitalists gave way, and trade unionism was recognized everywhere. The government pledged itself to introduce holidays with pay and a forty-hour week. But this was only the first instalment of the story.

The industrialists, though defeated in the industrial field, revenged themselves in the financial field. The Blum government was brought down by exactly the same method—an organized financial panic—as the City of London had used to bring down the Labour government in 1931. Leadership passed first to the radical left and then to Daladier's radical right. The reforms were called off. The French C.G.T. showed fight, but the "national defence" motif which had been used in Front Populaire propaganda had so confused the working class that united opposition to the Daladier government in a period of fascist aggression could not be secured. French politics sank back into their old ways, and socialists were left to draw their own conclusions.

The experience of the Front Populaire had made two things clear. The first was that radical economic action could never be expected from a middle-class party. The second was that extensive social reforms, even though they were supported by a majority of the population, could not be achieved until the centres of financial power had been brought under government control. Quite possibly the French economic system would have been sufficiently elastic to permit a measure of social reform in a peaceful



period. But the twofold pressure of social service and rearmament expenditure could not be met by the old methods. The French Socialist Party now had to consider how to square a very unmanageable circle. Foreign policy considerations demanded two things: immensely increased rearmament expenditure and internal anti-fascist unity. Popular sentiment wanted expensive social reforms. Expensive social reforms could either be met by cutting down rearmament expenditure or by pushing forward socialist methods of financial control. And both these measures would have destroyed anti-fascist unity.

The British Labour Party had to face very similar difficulties, phrased differently because of different parliamentary tactics, but essentially similar. After the Labour Party Conference of 1932, which had declared itself in favour of the immediate nationalization of the joint-stock banks, Labour Party policy swung to the right again under the influence of events in Germany. It was felt that any definite socialist policy would so disturb business confidence that a Labour Party majority, impossible without the support of the moderate and non-party voters, could not be achieved. The non-party voter, it was thought, would favour social reform and a foreign policy based on the League of Nations, but would fight shy of any form of nationalization. Accordingly the Labour Party fought the general election of 1935 with a very moderate programme and emerged without conspicuous success. The National Government had secured a large part of the unrepresented

Liberal vote by declaring that it stood for a League foreign policy.

But the disappointing result of the election did not alter the party's programme. Events abroad had gone too far for that. It was a matter of common agreement, once the menace of fascist aggression had become clear, that the most important task of the Labour Party was to unite not only all socialists but all democrats against it. Abroad, by a democratic league of pooled security which would include Russia, and by close consultation with the U.S.A., at home by the recruitment of all the progressive forces under the Labour banner. The retreat of the National Government from the League position, made explicit by Neville Chamberlain in his notorious speech to the 1900 Club in June 1936, would, the party organizers supposed, bring the Liberal supporters of the League over to the Labour camp. The surrender of strategic positions in Czechoslovakia and Spain might also cool off those National Government supporters who demanded a rational policy of national defence. A moderate policy did not prevent the advocacy of methods of piecemeal socialization, but it did not involve a direct attack on the capitalist strongholds.

So much was agreed, but a divergence of view arose, not on fundamental principles, but on a question of tactics. Should the Labour Party merely sit down and play Pied Piper to the progressive voters? Or should it embark on a policy of short-term collaboration with all the progressive organizations? As the international situation went from bad

to worse, new centres of opposition to the government arose. Should the Labour Party try to draw them into support of the full Labour programme and Labour candidates? Or should it go half-way to meet them and allow the nomination of "progressive" candidates in place of the official Labour nominees?

This inner party disagreement came out into the open when Sir Stafford Cripps, a member of the party executive, circulated a memorandum advising a "Popular Front" of all the progressive forces to all the Labour Party organizations. The Party executive told him to withdraw the memorandum, as it would have a prejudicial effect on a national recruiting campaign it was organizing with the political section of the co-operative movement. Cripps refused to do so, was duly expelled from the party, and embarked on a campaign of his own, the object of which was to secure support for a Petition demanding a Popular Front, which was to be presented for discussion at Labour's Whitsun Conference.

What were the motives behind this strong minority movement in the Labour Party?

First of all, it represented a wish, echoed by Liberal supporters, to reconstitute a strong two-party system in order to stabilize British democracy as a whole. In numbers of constituencies, conservative candidates had triumphed over a divided opposition, which, if united, would have secured an anti-government majority. Separate Labour and Liberal platforms, rival speakers supporting the



same foreign policy, and a very similar home policy, confused and disheartened the electorate, and often resulted in very low polls—always a dangerous sign for democracy. The Labour appeal for a “united front of the democracies against the dictatorships” did not make sense to the non-party electorate while the three-cornered fights were still in progress at home.

Secondly, it represented a wish for quick results. Granted an electoral agreement with the Liberals would strengthen the Liberal position proportionately more than it would the Labour position, and would involve the inclusion of Liberals or at any rate “Lib-Labs” in the Cabinet. But it was only by such expedients that another ten years or so of powerless opposition could be prevented. And the Labour movement, let alone democracy, could ill afford to wait while one democratic position after another was being surrendered. A purist Labour policy would involve winning the great majority of the seats now held by the government by majorities of 6,000 votes or less if a good working majority was to be achieved. And to pretend that that was possible was frivolously optimistic and objectively defeatist.

Transport House had formidable arguments on its side too. It pointed to the Popular Front in France, unsuccessful because of its reluctance to pursue radical economic measures. Transport House had declared itself genuinely ready to pass measures of control over the joint-stock banks. Did the Popular Frontists believe that their Liberal supporters would

acquiesce in such a measure when it came to the point? Had it not been proved that accelerated rearmament and increased social services positively demanded socialized or at any rate semi-socialized finance? Without proper guarantees from the Liberals—and such guarantees would involve the reversal of Liberal doctrines—a Popular Front government could only bring disappointment and confusion to its supporters' expectations, and a dangerous reaction in its train.

The emergence of a Popular Front group had, curiously enough, driven the Labour Party to the left. There were some grounds for believing that Transport House's new insistence on measures of socialization was tactical, influenced partly by the fact that the small but energetic Communist Party were supporting Cripps, and partly by the feeling that the middle-class "progressives" who were now trickling into the Labour Party under his influence were lacking in that trade union commonsense which was an essential part of a Labour Party worker's equipment.

A small and eminently reasonable group is attempting to referee this inner-party struggle. It advocates local electoral arrangements with the Liberal Party, which would still permit freedom of action to both parties. But so far its fate is the fate of all well-meaning referees in an exciting fight.

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So far, the writer has not attempted to distract the reader by presenting her personal opinions. An

attempt has been made at impartiality, and like all such attempts it will be represented as partial by somebody. But to leave the present situation in Great Britain hanging in the air, as it were, would not be impartiality but moral cowardice.

In her opinion, the present political issues at home are exceedingly important. But, to her, they do not imply merely a preference for Cripps or for Herbert Morrison, for one set of tactics over another. They require, if a new and successful formulation of tactics is to be made, the answer to a very difficult question, which is nothing more or less than the stale old question—Can capitalism continue?

Even economists, whose job it is to answer such questions, do not agree, but, generally speaking, the majority hold that capitalism can, by recourse to unorthodox financial methods, struggle on somehow. In America and Great Britain, the economic crisis of 1929-32 was weathered. Indeed, in Great Britain, the agricultural depression abroad positively benefited the home consumer. In France, recovery was slowed up by the ignorance of the small rentier class, but it came. It was only in the unstable countries, debtor countries without large capital reserves, that capitalism had to reorganize itself on fascist or semi-fascist lines.

So economic depression brought about, not a socialist revolution, but a fascist revolution. In Germany, in fact, capitalism did without fascism as long as it could, but menaced simultaneously by a crisis and the possibility of revolution, it called in its help. But fascism could not have succeeded



without mass support. True, the opposition to fascism was weak and disunited. But all the same fascism *had* succeeded in gaining mass support—the mass support of the lower middle class and the hopeless worker. The lower middle class, a Marxist will perhaps retort, is not a real class, it is the camp follower of capitalism. That is perfectly true of the old-fashioned middle class—the small tradesman, the small producer, and sometimes the small farmer—who, while antagonistic to the big capitalism of the chain store, the monopoly, and the big landowner, is more frightened still by socialism. Unreasonably, but there it is. This class would not have provided the numbers required by a victorious fascism. But another “petite bourgeoisie” has come into existence. With the increased use of technical aids to production, industry is requiring less and less manual labour. But the distributive and clerical side of industry can only be mechanized up to a certain point, and as it expands it demands a larger and larger staff. The new “petite bourgeoisie” is the salariat, not antagonistic to big business, but created by it, and sharing in its profits by the diffusion of the joint-stock shareholding system. This does not imply that industry has democratized itself or that property is now more widely diffused. The only democratic type of shareholding is co-operative shareholding, and the shareholding system is in fact developing towards an even greater autocracy through the advance of the “holding company” system. And property is not more diffused, but has simply changed its form. For

instead of the hundreds of thousands who owned property in land and bricks and mortar, hundreds of thousands now own shares and debentures instead.

Obviously, any kind of expropriatory socialism is going to provoke the hornets' nest of the share-owning salariat. Simultaneously, the continuation of the present dot-and-go-one kind of capitalism is going to mean permanent unemployment on a large scale and continued low standards of life for the working class, especially as capitalism is now functioning under the increased strain of rearmament. While Great Britain retains her standing as a creditor nation, the rate of her impoverishment will be slow, for her consumers can still take advantage of cheap imports. But Great Britain is not existing in an empty world. Quite apart from the dangerous effects of economic nationalism on her export trade, she has to face the fascist threat of a totally unreasonable war. As the contagion of fascism closes one export market after another, her unemployment will increase. That, perhaps, her great reserves of capital can stand, for some time at least. British capitalism, unless it is flagrantly attacked, has no interest in going to war. But fascism, in so far as it is independent of its native capitalists, is psychologically ready for war, because it is driven, by the straitness of its internal economy, to a policy of expansion. In order to insulate itself from outside disturbances it has to develop the home market. It has distributed consuming power, not by raising wages, but by employing everybody at low wages. But it must, at the same time provide a consumer for

its unused productive resources, so the State becomes the consumer of armaments. It has chosen armaments rather than houses or luxury articles partly because its prestige is based on an appeal to emotional nationalism, partly because great metallurgical industries already existed.

It is extremely doubtful whether British capitalism could withstand a war unaltered. Whatever the outcome, it would have to reorganize itself completely, perhaps on a semi-socialist, perhaps on a fascist basis. But no socialist can consider waiting upon the doubtful issue of a war, moral reasons apart, for the havoc it had caused would create entirely unnecessary and hideously difficult economic problems. Socialists must begin to create a stable economic system before such a catastrophe, and, as far as possible, without provoking the dangerous hostility of the small investor.

The answer to our question has resolved itself thus: an attenuated capitalism can survive for a long time providing it is not disorganized by, or has to spend all its reserves on a war, and providing a fascist reorganization is not provoked by fears of revolution.

A positive programme now begins to make itself clear:

1. Resistance to further fascist economic expansion, and its corollary, political expansion. So far, any supporter of the National Government would agree, but would not assume that economic defence also implies political defence. And



political defence implies "putting heart into the democracies" by open co-operation with them.

2. Control of the main financial organs.
3. Gradual socialization with special forms of relief for small shareholders and property owners.

This is not, in fact, any different from the official Labour Party programme. The whole question, then, resolves itself into the question of "putting it across" to the salaried middle-class man and woman and the owner of a small business, as well as to the working man under the influence of the same "ideology." For with their support and confidence the political resistance of the big financial world could be overcome because it would find itself without the numerical superiority necessary to it under democracy. But such a programme must be explicit, and its execution resolute; there must be no time for cold feet. For we know by experience that hesitation allows the conservative financial forces to use the very potent instrument of panic.

Putting it across to the small man involves a different kind of propaganda. The danger of the Popular Front form of propaganda—propaganda by the spectacle of united action—is that it is not sufficiently explicit. To many voters the sight of a socialist and a liberal on the same platform may merely arouse in him the suspicion that he is being sold a Labour pig in a Liberal poke. No, the pig must be on show, and its good points displayed.

But not rhetorically displayed. It is always dangerous to underrate the voter's intelligence, always better to speak above rather than below his head. Socialism, and not the phraseology of socialism, must be presented to the voter absolutely soberly, and in detail where it touches his own life. He must get the impression—and it is not a false one—that these details have been competently worked out by competent men. The Labour Party must improve the quality of its candidates and convince the local parties that parochial patriotism must not stand in the way of candidates with high intellectual qualifications when these are not to be found locally. It must prelude the next general election by an educational campaign not only designed for the public but for its own partisans.

But the writer does not mean to preclude possible co-operation with the Liberal Party. There are many constituencies, chiefly rural constituencies, where a three-cornered fight would be simply ridiculous. In these the Labour Party must support with all its energies the progressive candidate with the best chance of success, and demand from the Liberal Party a similar reciprocal guarantee.



## BIOGRAPHICAL APPENDIX

(Arranged alphabetically)

VICTOR ADLER, 1852-1918, joined Workmen's Party in Vienna and edited *Die Arbeiterzeitung*. Represented united Austrian Labour Party at Second International Congress in 1889. Elected to Reichsrat in 1905 and worked for universal suffrage, secured in 1907. Read declaration of social-democrats to provisional German-Austrian National Assembly in 1918.

GRACCHUS BABŒUF, 1760-97, founded "Le Tribun du peuple" in Paris in 1794, attacking terrorists and economic results of the Revolution. Became a terrorist after short imprisonment, through influence of Lebois. Founded Société des Égaux, which was joined by remaining Jacobins. Arrested with Darthé and Buonarrotti and executed for conspiring against the Directory.

MIKHAIL BAKUNIN, 1814-76, served in Russian imperial guard but resigned in protest against tsarist methods in Poland. He took part in the unsuccessful defence of the Dresden revolutionary government and was sent to Siberia from where he escaped and returned to Europe in 1861. He succeeded Proudhon as anarchist leader, organized the Alliance of Socialist Democracy and later the secret society, Y. He directed the anarchist insurrection at Lyons in 1870 which failed. The Bakunists controlled several towns during the Spanish revolution in 1873. Publication:—*God and the State*.

ARMAND BARBÈS, 1809-70, belonged to the Société des Droits de l'Homme, conspired against the government of Louis Philippe and was condemned to lifelong imprisonment after the insurrection of 1839, the death penalty being commuted at the request of Victor Hugo.



He was released in 1848 and elected to the Constituent Assembly, but was implicated in the movement of May 15th and imprisoned until pardoned by Napoleon III after writing a patriotic letter to a friend on the eve of the Crimean War.

AUGUST BEBEL, 1840-1913, founded the Saxon People's Party which joined other socialist organizations to form Social-Democratic Party in 1869. Entered Reichstag, where he refused to vote money for Franco-Prussian war and supported the Paris Commune. Imprisoned with Liebknecht in 1872. Created office at Leipzig to assist victims of Bismarck's Exceptional Law of 1877. Carried resolution against participation of social-democrats in bourgeois administration at party congress at Dresden in 1903. Opposed von Tirpitz policy and governmental action during Moroccan crisis. Chief publications:—*Der Deutsche Bauernkrieg*; *Die Frau und der Sozialismus*.

AUGUST BECKER, 1814-75, was a colleague of Marx and Engels and helped with Weitling to reconstitute the "Federation of the Just" in Switzerland. It was based however on the communistic system of Weitling and not on that of Marx.

EDUARD BERNSTEIN, born 1850, joined Social-Democratic party in 1872 and edited the *Sozialdemokrat* (1881-90) with Bebel. Entered Reichstag as deputy for Breslau in 1902. Pacifist convictions made him join Independents during party split in 1916. Rejoined Majority Socialists in 1919. Chief publications:—*Die Voraussetzungen des Sozialismus*; *Zur Geschichte und Theorie des Sozialismus*; *Die deutsche Revolution*.

LEONIDA BISSOLATI, 1857-1920, was active member of Italian Socialist Party from its foundation in 1892 and edited *L'Avanti*. Left party in 1912 to found Reformist Socialist group. Became minister without portfolio in

Boselli's National Cabinet and resigned in 1918 owing to disapproval of Treaty of London.

LOUIS BLANC, 1811-82, founded *Revue du Progrès* and attacked the July Monarchy in *Histoire de dix ans*, published 1841. He became a member of the Provisional Government in 1848 and was authorized to call together the Commission of Luxembourg. After its failure owing to the setting up of national workshops by the Government as rival organizations, Blanc had to leave France and lived in England until 1871, when he returned, was elected deputy and carried a proposal in the Chamber for an amnesty for the Communards. Publications:—*L'Organisation du Travail*; *Histoire de la Révolution Française*; *Histoire de la Révolution de 1848*; *Lettres sur L'Angleterre*; *Discours Politiques*.

AUGUSTE BLANQUI, 1805-81, organized the "Society of the Seasons" with Barbès and Bernard and was imprisoned after the unsuccessful insurrection of 1839. As chief republican leader in 1848 he worked for a more socialist policy but was imprisoned after the attack on the Assembly. Released in 1859, he continued to organize secret socialist societies and trained a force of 4,000 men in Paris which directed the crowd after the news of Sedan in 1870. He was imprisoned by order of Thiers, while the Commune, led by his followers, was defeated. Publications:—*Critique Sociale*; *La Patrie en danger*.

PAUL BROUSSE, born 1844, gave up medicine for politics, attacking the Second Empire and becoming an active member of the First International. He helped to organize the Paris Commune and when it ended fled to Barcelona and then to Switzerland. In 1881 he returned to France and with Joffrin created the "possibilist" party which afterwards took his name. He was elected to the Paris municipal council, became its president in 1905 and a deputy in 1906.

ETIENNE CABET, 1788-1856, attacked the government of Louis Philippe in several pamphlets, in the journal *Le Populaire* and in his *History of the Revolution of 1830*. He had to leave France in 1834 and in England came under the influence of Owenism. He attempted to put his theories into practice in Texas and Illinois by founding model towns, but these did not succeed. Publications:—*History of the Revolution of 1789: A Voyage to Icaria*.

JAMES CONNOLLY, 1870-1916, was the first effective socialist propagandist in Ireland. He directed the six months' strike of Dublin transport and other workers in 1913, joined the Sinn Fein during the Great War and was commander-in-chief during the Easter Week Rebellion, after which he was executed. He wrote *Labour in Ireland*.

VICTOR PROSPER CONSIDÉRANT, 1808-93, succeeded Fourier as head of the movement. After the revolution of 1848 he was elected to the Constituent Assembly and in 1849 to the Legislative Assembly. His share in a demonstration led by Ledru-Rollin made it necessary for him to leave France and he founded the colony of La Réunion in Texas. Publications:—*La Destinée Sociale Exposition du système de Fourier; Principes du Socialisme*.

EUGENE DEBS, 1855-1926, was secretary to the Brotherhood of Locomotive Firemen, organized the American Railway union in 1893 and led the strike in 1894. He stood as socialist candidate for the Presidency four times, and edited the *National Rip-Saw*. He was imprisoned for violating the Espionage Act in 1918 but the sentence was commuted by President Harding. Publications:—*Liberty; Unionism and Socialism; The American Movement; Industrial Unionism; Walls and Bars*.

THEODORE DEZAMY, French scientific communist. Played an important part in organizing the French revolutionary workers, leading a revolutionary group



which carried on underground activities after the unsuccessful attempt at a rising in 1839, until 1848. His criticism of bourgeois society influenced Marx considerably, and he drew up a detailed scheme for communist social order. Publications:—*Code de la Communauté*; *Organisation de la liberté et du bien-être universel*; he also edited the *Almanack de la communauté*.

FRIEDRICH EBERT, 1870-1925, entered Reichstag as a socialist in 1912 and became chairman of the Social-Democratic Party in 1913. He led the Majority Socialists in 1916 and induced them to join Prince Max of Baden's cabinet in 1918. He became Chancellor when Scheidemann proclaimed the German republic and provisional president after the elections following the struggle with the Spartacists. He remained in this office until his death.

BARTHÉLEMY ENFANTIN, 1796-1864, met Saint-Simon in 1825 and became a leader of the sect. He was proclaimed Père Suprême with Bazard, from whom he separated later. In 1832 the halls of his sect were closed by the government and Enfantin retired to Menilmontant with forty disciples. After a short imprisonment he went to Egypt and on his return became a postmaster, a member of a scientific commission to Algeria, and a director of the Paris-Lyons railway. He started a daily journal, *Le Crédit*, which lasted three years. Publications:—*Doctrine de Saint-Simon*; *Économie politique Saint-Simonienne*.

FRIEDRICH ENGELS, 1820-95, born at Barmen, went to England in 1842 in connection with his father's business and came into contact with Chartist and Owenite movements. He met Marx in Paris in 1844. He took part in the Baden revolutionary outbreak and after its suppression fled to England, working first in the family business outside Manchester and then, after giving up

business for writing, in London. Influenced German Socialists after death of Marx.

FRANÇOIS CHARLES FOURIER, 1772-1837, earned his living as a broker at Lyons, writing in his spare time, until 1831, when he moved to Paris. Here a group of adherents, including Considérant, gathered round him and started the paper *Le Phalanstère*, afterwards *Le Phalange*. An attempt was made to establish a *phalange* near Rambouillet, which failed. Fourier wrote *Le Nouveau Monde Industriel*, *Théorie des quatre mouvements*.

WILLIAM GODWIN, 1756-1836, was brought up as a Calvinist and became a minister until 1782, when he came to London and gave up preaching for writing. He was in sympathy with the French Revolution and joined the Revolutionists' Club, meeting Lord Stanhope, Horne Tooke and Holcroft. He stood by the prisoners charged with high treason in 1794 and his own trial was discussed in the Cabinet. He married Mary Wollstonecraft in 1797 and after her death Mrs. Clairmont, with whom he started business as a bookseller. After constant financial difficulties through which he was helped by Shelley, who married his daughter, the Government of Grey gave him a minor post attached to the Exchequer which he held until his death. Publications:—*An Enquiry concerning Political Justice*; *Of Population* (answer to Malthus); *History of the Commonwealth*; *Thoughts on Man*.

KARL GRÜN, 1813-87, was the chief representative of "German" or "True" Socialism of the Hegelian, speculative type. Mehring says of him: "Grün was a typical journalist in the bad sense of the word, equally devoid of depth and seriousness, and cocksure in his judgments. These were so superficial that even when their phrasing made them seem acute, they served only to expose his 'inanity'."

JULES GUESDE, 1845-, edited *Les Droits de l'Homme* and was forced to leave France in 1871 after publishing articles defending the Commune. He attended the first Parisian International Congress and was afterwards imprisoned. He edited *Le cri du Peuple*, *Le Socialiste* and *Égalité*, and with Marx, whose daughter he married, drew up the collectivist and revolutionary programme accepted by National Labour Congress in 1880. He was elected to Chamber of Deputies in 1893 and opposed Jaurès for advocating the participation of socialists in the Government. He was minister without portfolio from 1914-15. Publications:—*Collectivisme et Socialisme*; *Christianisme et Socialisme* (with M. Sanquier).

JAMES KEIR HARDIE, 1856-1915, started the *Labour Leader* in 1887 and attacked the Liberal members of the Parliamentary committee of Trades Union Congress, with John Burns and Tom Mann. He was largely responsible for the foundation of the Scottish Labour Party and the Independent Labour Party, for inducing the Trades Union Congress in 1899 to authorize Labour Representative Committees in conjunction with the I.L.P. and other bodies. He was elected as I.L.P. member for South West Ham and later for Merthyr. He attempted with Edouard Vaillant to bind the Second International to calling a general strike in the event of war and its failure was a great disappointment which hastened his death.

JULIAN HARNEY, Chartist leader, was a member of the London Working Men's Association founded by Lovett, but seceded and formed the Democratic Association in 1838, which established close relations with foreign political refugees in London. He edited the *Northern Star*, giving much space to foreign affairs and reviewing revolutionary movements abroad. He founded the Society of Fraternal Democrats, the first international



revolutionary organization of workers, in 1845, and after the failure of 1848 started a fund for victims of counter-revolution on the Continent. After leaving the *Northern Star* in 1850 he wrote for the *Friend of the People*, the *Red Republican* and the radical and republican *Reynolds's Newspaper*.

WILLIAM DUDLEY HAYWOOD, 1869-1928, born at Salt Lake City, worked as a miner and became secretary-treasurer of the Western Federation of Miners in 1900, the year before the Telluride strike. He opposed the craft unionism of the American Federation of Labour and presided at the Chicago convention in 1905 which founded the Industrial Workers of the World. He organized campaigns for the Socialist Party and the I.W.W., of which he became national secretary. Arrested in 1917 for sedition, he escaped while released on bail and went to Russia where he spoke on behalf of revolutionary agitators in other countries. Publications:—*Industrial Socialism* (with Frank Bohn); *Autobiography*.

GUSTAVE HERVÉ, born 1871, was a professor at the University of Brest but had to leave this post in 1901 after a trial following the publication of anti-militarist articles. He founded the socialist paper *La Guerre Sociale* but in 1914 renamed it *La Victoire* and left the Socialist Party, giving his support to the ministry of Clemenceau.

ALEXANDER HERZEN, born in Moscow in 1812, was twice exiled for revolutionary tendencies and left Russia in 1847 to settle in London, where he established a "free Russian press." Its publications, which attacked the Russian system of government, were introduced into Russia after the Emperor Nicholas's death and had considerable influence, weakened by Herzen's support of the Polish insurgents in 1863. Publications:—*Vom anderen Ufer*; *Lettres de France et d'Italie*; *Memoirs*.

MOSES HESS was a left-wing Hegelian of the same type as Grün and joined the Brussels group of communists led by Marx and Engels in about 1846. He shared in founding the *Rheinische Zeitung* and was a colleague of Engels on the staff of *Der Gesellschaftsspiegel*. He joined the faction of the Communist League led by Schapper and Willich after 1848 and later left the revolutionary movement for Zionism. He continued to support the I.W.M.A., however, and opposed Bakunin. Publications: —*Die Heilige Geschichte der Menschheit*; *Die europäische Triarchie*.

WILLIAM MORRIS HUGHES, 1864-, organized the Sydney waterside workers and entered the New South Wales Parliament in 1894. He became Minister for External Affairs in J. C. Watson's Labour ministry and Attorney-General in Fisher's ministry in 1908. He succeeded Fisher as Prime Minister in 1915, helped to raise the Australian Expeditionary Force and to eliminate German commercial influence in Australia. After attempting to introduce conscription in 1916 Hughes formed a Coalition Government of Liberals and part of the Labour Party. At the Peace Conference he asserted Australia's right to a mandate over Papua. The Liberal-Country victory in 1923 forced him to resign.

HENRY HUNT, 1773-1835, became a radical in 1806. He spoke at a series of meetings and presided at the meeting in St. Peter's Fields outside Manchester. He was imprisoned for two years and exposed conditions at Ilchester prison in *A Peep into Jail*. He was elected member for Preston in 1830 and in Parliament presented a petition for women's rights and opposed the Corn Laws.

HENRY HYNDMAN, 1842-1921, helped to form the London Democratic Federation, afterwards the Social Democratic Federation, in 1881. William Morris, Tom

Mann, John Burns and George Lansbury were among his colleagues. The S.D.F. encouraged the Trafalgar Square riots in the '80's and the dock strike of 1889. Hyndman denounced the Boer War but became a patriot in 1914 and was expelled from his party. Publications:—*England for All* (1881), *The Evolution of Socialism* (1920); *England since the collapse of Owenism*.

PABLO IGLESIAS, 1850-1925, became secretary of the International Proletarian Federation in 1871. He founded typographical societies in 1872 and edited *El Socialista* and helped to form the first Spanish socialist group in 1879. He was elected to the Cortes in 1910 and led the Parliamentary Socialist Party in 1923 when Primo de Rivera overthrew the constitution.

JEAN JAURÈS, 1859-1914, became a socialist in 1890 and from 1893 remained in the Chamber with only one electoral defeat. He founded *L'Humanité* with Briand in 1904 and after the Amsterdam congress of 1905 led the Unified Socialist Party in France, directed its parliamentary activity and drafted resolutions at congresses. He attacked German social-democracy. In 1914 he went to Brussels to confer with representatives of international labour on how to avert war and was there assassinated. He wrote *L'Armée Nouvelle*.

ERNEST JONES, 1819-69, was born in Berlin where his father was equerry to the Duke of Cumberland. He became a lawyer but took an active part in the Chartist movement from 1845-54, writing for the *Northern Star* and editing *The Labourer* with Feargus O'Connor. He was imprisoned in 1848 and wrote *The Revolt of Hindostan* in jail. He started the *People's Paper* on his release and later joined the advanced radical party. Publications:—*The Song of the Lower Classes*; *Songs of Democracy*.

KARL KAUTSKY, born in 1854 at Prague, founded *Die Neue Zeit* in 1883 and helped to draw up the Erfurt



programme in 1891. He joined Haase in 1917 in organizing the Independent Social-Democratic Party but was hostile to the V.K.P.D. and eventually returned to the Social Democratic party. Publications:—*The Dictatorship of the Proletariat* (attacking Leninism); *Der Weg zu Macht*; *Vorläufer des Sozialismus*; *Der Politische Massenstreik*; *The Guilt of William Hohenzollern*.

ALEXANDER KERENSKY, born 1881, was elected to the Fourth Duma and joined the Labour group. He was Minister of Justice in the Provisional Government formed after the revolution of February 1917 and later became War Minister, in which capacity he revived the death penalty in the army and effected a brief offensive. He succeeded Prince Lvov as Prime Minister of the second Provisional Government until the October revolution, when he fled from Petrograd. After the failure of his attempt to march on the capital he retired to Paris. Publications:—*The Prelude to Bolshevism*; *The Catastrophe*.

BELA KUN, born near Győr in 1886 of Jewish parentage, became a socialist at an early age. He was captured by the Russians early in the war and spread communist propaganda among Hungarian prisoners. Lenin helped him to return to Hungary where he started *Vörös Vysag* (Red News) and was imprisoned until 1919, when the Karolyi Cabinet handed over the government to the Left. He organized a new army with Boehm and defeated Czech troops occupying Slovakia but was defeated by the Rumanians and fled to Vienna and then to Russia. He returned to Vienna in 1928 to organize a Hungarian C.P. and was arrested.

FERDINAND LASSALLE, 1825-64, was imprisoned for revolutionary activities in 1848 and in 1862 started a campaign for a German workers' party, with universal suffrage and State socialism as its aims. He published

*The Working Man's Programme* and the *Open Letter* and in 1863 founded the Allgemeiner Deutscher Arbeiterverein. His propaganda was particularly effective in the Rhineland. Other publications:—*Die System des erworbenen Rechts*; *Zur Arbeiterfrage*; *Über Verfassungswesen*.

ALEXANDRE LEDRU-ROLLIN, 1807-74, was called to the bar and retained for the Republican defence during the political trials of 1830-40. He was elected to the Chamber in 1841 and founded *La Réforme*, became Minister of the Interior in the Provisional Government of 1848 and member of the executive appointed by the Constituent Assembly. During the crisis of May 15th he sided with Lamartine against the proletarians. He fled to London after heading a demonstration against Louis Napoleon and joined the Revolutionary Committee of Europe. On his return to France in 1870 he was elected to the National Assembly.

VLADIMIR ILYICH LENIN, 1870-1924, studied law and Marxism and began propaganda work in Petrograd in 1894, organizing the "Union of struggle for the Emancipation of the working class." He was exiled to Siberia for three years in 1895, where he completed *The Development of Capitalism in Russia*, and married N. K. Krupskaya. In 1900 he went to Switzerland, arranged for the publication of *The Spark* (Iskra) and worked out the programme with Plekhanov which was accepted by the second congress of the R.S.D.A.P. in 1903. He returned to Russia in 1905 during the general strike and after the failure of the December rising formulated the principles of revolutionary exploitation of parliamentary methods. In 1912, Lenin called a conference of Russian Bolshevik organizations at Prague, which elected a new central committee and finally split with the Mensheviks. Lenin started the publication of *Pravda* in Petrograd and in 1914 published a manifesto denouncing the war. In 1915 the left

wing of the first international socialist conference, opposing the war, held in Switzerland, adopted Lenin's demand for transformation of imperialist war to civil war, and became the nucleus of the Comintern. Lenin reached Russia in April 1917, and directed the October rising; he was appointed head of the Soviet of People's Commissars and moved the decree dissolving the constituent assembly passed by the Central Executive; in February he induced the Central Committee to make peace with Germany. During the counter-revolution he carried on propaganda, organized the food supply, and kept in touch with the Red Army until 1921. At the 8th Congress of Soviets in 1920 he reported on the plan for the electrification of the country.

KARL LIEBKNECHT, 1871-1919, qualified as a lawyer and joined the left wing of the social democratic-party. He entered first the Prussian Chamber of Deputies and then the Reichstag in 1912. He refused to vote war credits, organized anti-war demonstrations and founded the Spartacus Union; he was imprisoned in 1916 until 1918, when he led the Spartacists to demand a "free socialist republic." He was murdered with Rosa Luxemburg in the insurrection of 1919. Publications:—*Militarismus und Antimilitarismus*; *Briefe aus dem Felde, aus der Untersuchungshaft und aus dem Zuchthaus*.

WILHELM LIEBKNECHT, 1826-1900, was expelled from Berlin for political activities and after two years in Switzerland tried to found the Baden republic in 1848. He was imprisoned and fled first to Geneva and then to London, where he lived for thirteen years in close association with Marx. After the amnesty of 1861 he returned to Germany, joined the Arbeiterverein and entered the North German Reichstag in 1867. He was imprisoned in 1872 for opposition to the Franco-Prussian war, but became a member of the German Reichstag in



1874. The Union of German Socialists at the Congress of Gotha in 1874 was largely due to his influence, and he edited *Vorwärts* after 1890. Publications:—*Geschichte der französischen Revolution*; *Die Emser Depesche*; *Robert Owen*.

WILLIAM LOVETT, a follower of Robert Owen, founded the London Workingmen's Association in 1836. Its activities were confined to education, peaceful propaganda and moral persuasion. Lovett condemned incendiary speeches and agitation and demanded repudiation of physical force at the Chartist Convention of 1839. He was imprisoned and on his release refused to join the National Chartist Association, starting a People's League to work for the Charter by constitutional methods.

LEON MORONES, Mexican socialist, helped to organize the Indian workers in Mexico and the Mexican Confederation of Labour. He was Secretary of Labour, Commerce and Industry in the Mexican Cabinet after 1920, was anti-clerical in his views and advocated nationalization of the land.

KARL HEINRICH MARX, 1818-83, studied law, history and philosophy at Bonn and Berlin, where he met the two Bauers and their Hegelian circle. In Paris he met Engels and Heine and wrote for the *Deutsche-französische Jahrbucher* and *Vorwärts*. Forced to leave France at the request of the Prussian Government he went to Brussels and joined, with Engels, the "Federation of the Just," later to become the Communist League, for which they wrote the Communist Manifesto in 1847. The next year he founded the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* in Cologne and afterwards in London, where he settled in 1849. The International Working Men's Association was started there in 1864 and after its dissolution in 1876 Marx returned to research work.

F. D. MAURICE was one of the founders of Christian socialism with Charles Kingsley and Ludlow. It was a movement of peaceful agitation for the organization of labour on principles of association instead of competition. Maurice aimed at eliminating Chartism and Owenism from the working class, and encouraged emigration.

ALEXANDRE MILLERAND, born 1859, entered the French Chamber as a radical-socialist in 1885 and arbitrated in the Carmaux strike of 1892. As a Minister of Commerce in Waldeck-Rousseau's cabinet, 1899, he introduced trade union representatives on to the Supreme Labour Council, organised local labour councils, edited *La Lanterne*. He was Minister of Public Works in Briand's cabinet 1909, and suppressed the railway strike: Minister of War under Poincaré in 1912, but resigned with Viviani's cabinet in 1915. As Prime Minister succeeding Clemenceau in 1920 he ordered the occupation of Frankfurt, sent a French contingent to Poland against the Soviets, and stopped the organization of strikes in France. He became President and resigned after the radical-socialist victory in 1924.

WILLIAM MORRIS, 1834-96, began decoration as a career in 1859 and started a business with Rossetti, Burne-Jones, Madox Brown, Faulkner, and Marshall, later becoming sole manager. Joined the Democratic Federation in 1883 and in 1884 helped to form the Socialist League. He edited *The Commonweal* until 1890 when the anarchist section of the League became dominant: the Hammersmith branch remained independent for two years. Publications:—Contributions to *The Commonweal*; *The Dream of John Ball*; *News from Nowhere*.

FEARGUS O'CONNOR, 1794-1855, entered Parliament as member for Cork in 1832, became a Chartist leader in 1838 and started the *Northern Star*. He reorganized

the movement by founding the National Charter Association, allowed a general strike in 1842 and afterwards condemned it. He started land settlement for town workers at Herringsgate which failed, and was declared insane in 1852. His funeral was the occasion of a last Chartist demonstration.

ROBERT OWEN, 1771-1858, managed cotton mills in Manchester and Lanark where he successfully introduced reforms and improved conditions among the workers. Started agitation for factory reform in 1815 and drafted the textile factory bill passed in a mutilated form in 1819. In 1817 he drew up a report on the Poor Law to House of Commons. He founded the community of New Harmony in Indiana in 1825. Many co-operative societies were started by his followers. On his return to England he started the Equitable Labour Exchanges and helped to form the Grand National Consolidated Trades Union. After 1834 he devoted himself to educational and moral reform. Publications:—*A New View of Society*; *Report to the County of Lanark*; *The Book of the New Moral World*; *Revolution in the Mind and Practice of the Human Race*.

FERNAND PELLOUTIER, 1867-1901, became an advanced republican and joined the "Parti Ouvrier." He defended the general strike before the congress of the Guesdist party in 1892 and broke with the party over this question. In 1893 he went to Paris and came under the influence of the anarchist communists. He was appointed secretary of the Federation des Bourses du Travail, formed in 1892, which was the most important trade union organization in France until 1902, when it amalgamated with the General Confederation of Labour (C.G.T.)

GEORGY VALENTINOVITCH PLEKHANOV, 1857-1918, joined the Narodnik movement and led the first popular demonstration in Petrograd in 1876. He



left the Narodniks in 1879 and helped to form the Marxist Emancipation of Labour group in Geneva where he spent forty years of exile. Edited *Iskra* with Lenin and Martov. He worked with the Mensheviks, occasionally co-operating with Bolsheviks until 1914, when he advocated "revolutionary defence" of Russia. He supported the Provisional Government against the Bolsheviks in 1917. Chief publication:—*Beiträge zur Geschichte des Materialismus*.

PIERRE JOSEPH PROUDHON, 1809-65, was mainly self-educated, obtained a pension from the academy of Besançon and wrote three treatises on property, followed by *Systèmes des contradictions économiques*. He settled in Paris, wrote for the *Représentant du peuple*, proposed a tax of 1s. 3d. on interest and rent in the Assembly, and was imprisoned for three years. He then published an attack on the Church and other institutions and fled to Brussels, returning to France to die. Publications:—*De la justice dans la Révolution et dans l'Église; Qu'est-ce que c'est la propriété?*

CLAUDE HENRI DE ROUVROY, COMTE DE SAINT-SIMON, 1760-1825, fought in the War of American Independence, was imprisoned during the Terror and on his release made money through land speculation. His schemes to unite the Atlantic and Pacific by canal and to connect Madrid with the sea left him impoverished, and his work attracted little attention until after his death. His doctrines were propagated by Enfantin and Bazard. Publications:—*Du système industriel; Catéchisme des Industriels; Nouveau Christianisme*.

JOSÉ SALAS, Chilean socialist leader, took active part in organizing the socialist movement which started in Chile in 1912, held its first convention in Santiago in 1915 and established the *Vanguardia* as its official organ. Salas was the workers' candidate for President in 1925

and received 70,000 votes as compared with the successful candidate's 170,000. A general strike was declared in Santiago following on the workers' demand for an annulment of the election.

KARL SCHAPPER, described by Engels as "the professional revolutionist of the eighteen-thirties," took part in Büchner's conspiracy and in the attack on the police station at Frankfurt in 1833, afterwards joining Mazzani's forces in Savoy. He became a member of the Federation of the Just, which fought with the Société des Saisons in the rising of May 1839, and was expelled from France. In London he met Engels, reconstituted the Federation of the Just under cover of the communist Workers' Educational Society, helped to form the Communist League and joined the federal democrats. After the suppression of the German revolution of 1848 he led a faction of the Communist League with Willich against Marx and Engels.

DR. SUN-YAT-SEN, 1867-1925, was son of a poor farmer at Hsiang Shan, studied medicine at Hong Kong and became friends with Sir James Cantlie. He was implicated in the revolutionary plot in 1895 but escaped to Europe where the Chinese Revolutionary League was formed in 1905. Dr. Sun created the Kuomintang, organized the revolution of 1911 and returned to China in 1912 to be provisional president of the new republic. He resigned the presidency in favour of Yuan Shih-K'ai, remaining Director-general of Trade and Transport. He led the movement for an independent republic of South China in 1917, was driven from Kwangtung after the breach with General Ch'en Ch'uing-ming, defeated him in 1923 and held the position of chief executive in the province until his death. Publications:—*The International Development of China*; *The Doctrine of Sun Wen*; *The Principles of Democratic Government*.

THOMAS SPENCE, 1750-1814, invented a system of land nationalization explained in *The Meridian Sun of Liberty*. He kept a bookstall in London and was twice imprisoned for seditious publications: the best known was *The Restorer of Society to its Natural State*. After his death the Spencean Society was formed.

ARTHUR THISTLEWOOD, 1770-1819, became a soldier and visited France and America, returning to England with Republican sympathies. He joined the Spencean Society and helped to arrange the Spa Fields meeting in 1816. After a year's imprisonment for challenging the Home Secretary to a duel he plotted to assassinate the Cabinet Ministers (Cato Street Conspiracy). The plot was betrayed and Thistlewood arrested and hanged.

COUNT LEO TOLSTOY, 1828-1910, was influenced by the works of Rousseau while a student; joined the army and after the fall of Sevastopol lived in St. Petersburg and travelled in Western Europe. He settled eventually at Yasnaya Polyana, where he was appointed to deal with land disputes over serfs, and started a school for peasant children. In 1876 began to evolve a type of ethical Christianity, teaching that property and all forms of violence were wrong and attacking Russian and Western European systems of government. This religion did not become organized until after a visit to the Moscow slums. Tolstoy was excommunicated by the Russian church in 1901. Publications after the period of his conversion:—*Resurrection*; *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*; *Master and Man*; *Memoirs of a Madman*.

LEV DAVIDOVICH TROTSKY (BRONSTEIN) was exiled to Siberia in 1898 as a revolutionary, escaped to England in 1902 and collaborated with Lenin, Plekhanov, and others in the publication of *Iskra*. Returning to Russia in 1905, he became a member of the St. Petersburg



Soviet of Workers' Deputies, was again sent to Siberia and escaped to Vienna. Here he wrote for *Arbeiter Zeitung* and *Pravda*. He attended the Social-Democratic Congress at Copenhagen in 1910, holding a position half-way between the Bolsheviks and Mensheviks. During the war he went to America and edited *Novy Mir*. In 1917 he went back to Russia, helped to organize the October revolution, and as People's Commissar for Foreign Affairs in the new Soviet government negotiated the Brest-Litovsk treaty. He organized the Red Army and prevented the collapse of the railway system. He opposed the advance on Warsaw during the Polish war of 1920.

After Lenin's death Trotsky lost his post as Commissar of War and was expelled from the Communist Party and exiled. He founded the Fourth International and in 1937 was examined in Mexico for conspiring against the Government of the U.S.S.R. He was cleared.

EMILE VANDERVELDE, 1866-1939, joined the Belgian Labour Party and became its leader. He entered parliament in 1894 and worked for universal suffrage. In 1914 he concentrated upon national defence and became a member of the cabinet. He used his influence for the insertion of labour clauses during peace negotiations. Leading influence in Second International. As Minister for Justice in Liberal-Catholic-Socialist cabinet after the war he reformed the prison system, and took an active part in negotiating the Locarno Pact in 1925. Publications:—*Le parti ouvrier belge*; *Le socialisme contre l'état*; *Réalisations socialistes*; *Le Belgique et le Congo*.

BEATRICE WEBB, married Sidney Webb in 1892. Before her marriage investigated conditions in East End with Charles Booth, and studied co-operative theory and practice. Perfected methods of social investigation and research. Her marriage to Sidney Webb resulted in a

remarkable intellectual partnership. Wrote *My Apprenticeship*.

SIDNEY WEBB, born in 1859, was an early member of the Fabian Society, entered the L.C.C. in 1892 and served on Royal Commissions for trade union law and on coal mines. He and his wife promoted the development of the London School of Economics and issued the *Minority Report on the Poor Law*. He was President of the Board of Trade in the first Labour Government of 1922 and Colonial Secretary in 1929. Publications (with Beatrice Webb):—*Trade Unionism*; *Industrial Democracy*; *The Decay of Capitalist Civilization*; *English Local Government*; *Soviet Communism*.

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